commonweal

William Lee Miller
REAGAN COUNTRY

ONE DOLLAR
OCTOBER 24, 1980

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Why I am voting for

☒ **Reagan** by Michael Novak

☒ **Carter** by Thomas E. Cronin

☒ **And** C. Wade

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Correspondence

Infallibility & history

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: John Garvey makes some worthwhile points ("Orthodox and Infallible?" Aug. 29) about the necessity for orthodoxy as against its bankrupt alternatives of fanaticism, fundamentalism, or a shallow secularism, but his comments on the historical "cases" alleged against the doctrine are rather behind the times. He seems unaware of the fact that many professional ecumenists, Protestant and Catholic alike, now consider the Honorius case *et al*, as almost non-problems. I wonder, too, if Garvey knows that Hans Küng's treatment of the historical "cases" has been torn to shreds.

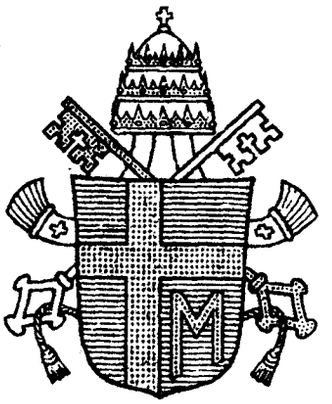
I may note likewise that this article grossly oversimplifies the patristic data regarding the substance of what we mean now by papal infallibility. Surely Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus did not use modern terminology — and who would expect them to use it? — but they did know and say that the see of Rome enjoys a singular status in preserving apostolic truth. Newman's discussion of the patristic literature on this doctrine is far more competent and satisfying.

(REV.) THOMAS DUBAY, S.M.

The author replies

Father Dubay does not say where Küng's historical arguments have been "torn to shreds," and this is wise of him, since that demolition job hasn't happened. The case of Honorius is not the most impressive papal deviation from orthodoxy or Christian morality, but Father Dubay tries to cover too much territory with that *et al*: most Protestant and Eastern Orthodox scholars surely do not regard Rome's claim to infallibility, however defined, as "almost a non-problem." Of course Rome has a special place in patristic times as a guardian of orthodoxy. I alluded to this, and the best Eastern Orthodox scholars agree. This is far from the claim to absolute jurisdiction made by Pius IX and succeeding popes. Newman's discussion of patristic literature on the papacy is certainly competent, but his work on the papacy is less probing than that of his friend Acton, whose bolder and more problematic scholarship has yet to be dealt with.

JOHN GARVEY



At the feet of the pope

Chatham, N.J.

To the Editors: The Editors of *Commonweal* exhibited their own infallibility by scheduling John Garvey's piece on that papal quality for the week that the pope decided to admit right-wing, but not liberal, Episcopalians to sacerdotal partnership with their Roman Catholic brethren.

Garvey goes far, but not far enough. Citing "The Vatican," and "The Roman Pontiff," he plainly seeks to avoid casting the stone where it should be cast, at the feet of one human being: Pope John Paul II. . . .

It is a man, a certain man, brought up in a certain conservatively Catholic country, who stopped, or slowed the laicization of priests. Not by accident, this same man has tried to prevent open discussion of priestly celibacy and priesthood for women. Nor is it accidental that this man is Pope when priests are told that they may not hold elective office, when the former Inquisition is revved up to oppose and try to silence theologians as they perform the questioning which is their task. Warnings to African Catholics not to be too African fall from the lips of John Paul II, and it is he who offers cryptically faint praise to liberation churches in South America. . .

SONDRA GORDON LANGFORD

Janus & Anti-Janus

Brookline, Mass.

To the Editors: John Garvey, in his article on papal infallibility [Aug. 29], wrote that nobody replied to Döllinger's views on this subject. He is mistaken. Döllinger, under the pseudonym of "Janus," was answered by Cardinal Hergenrother of Austria in his book "Anti-Janus."

George Gordon Coulton, a brilliant scholar on medieval civilization, gave a very detailed and critical review of the book, in his "Papal Infallibility."

PAUL MICHELSON

Oberammergau

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: May I offer a few comments on Professor Leonard Swidler's report "Passion Play Progress" [Aug. 1].

I would agree with his general view that there has been progress. The mayor of Oberammergau and the villagers are to be given credit for having taken a crucial first step in the direction of meeting some of the serious objections to the play's anti-Semitism. Given their past resistance to any change, their recognition of the need for changes here and now is in fact a giant step forward.

Having said this, we must now look at the changes to date to see whether in fact they are the remedies hoped for. In large measure they are not, nor do they in my view address specifically the anti-Jewish

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WORLD CHURCH IN THE MAKING

THE CURRENT Roman synod of the world's Catholic bishops serves, among other things, as a test of how well the church is doing in shedding a parochial Western European outlook on the way to becoming a genuinely world church. Dissatisfaction with an all-male and celibate clergy speaking for and to the experience of families throughout the world should not blind us to this larger issue. Nor should specifically American preoccupations, the trauma of reaction to *Humanae Vitae*, concern for more liberal rules regarding divorce and remarriage, the rights of women—nor Vatican displeasure with these concerns—none of this need distract us from the significance of the synod as a still rudimentary and groping attempt on the part of church leaders to shed the tradition of a Western superiority complex and embody a catholicity which has never been before.

As one American Protestant observer at Vatican II remarked in genuine awe and bewilderment: "The Roman church clearly represents the most cosmopolitan body in the Christian world; at the same time, it has one of the most parochial leaderships in that world." Setbacks, bureaucratic inertia, and just plain human fallibility should not blind us to the fact we've come some distance since that observation was made.

There is every sign in what we have heard so far from Rome that never before have the bishops there come so well prepared by preliminary consultation, study, and planning in their home regions as now. There have been reports of four American interventions so far: Archbishop John A. Quinn's demand that the church face the "good faith" dissent from the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* and improve its consultative dialogue with theologians; Bishop Robert E. Sanchez's straight talk about racism and the problems of immigrants and the "undocumented workers"; Bishop Joseph L. Bernardin's claim that devastating poverty, not permissiveness, caused the epidemic of teen-age pregnancies; and finally, by an as yet unidentified speaker, the insistence on the equality of women and men. None of these speeches came out of thin air. They came from unprecedented consultation with the laity on the part of the bishops' Ad Hoc Commission on Marriage and the Family (headed by Bishop Francis Stafford of Baltimore). They came from the pre-synodal consultation organized by the National Conferences of both American and Canadian bishops and Notre Dame University last June 15-18. The American bishops may not be using Father Andrew Greeley's figures to portray the situation and needs of the American family, but they are obviously not ignoring the data of social science, nor the insistence of lay colleagues in the ministry that the difficult questions be openly addressed. The system of consultation may be, undoubtedly is, far from adequate; it is nonetheless a promising step forward—and the message our bishops seem to be giving in Rome shows that promise.

The mixed Third World response to Archbishop Quinn's call for reexamination of

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the birth control issue is more important than the reaction of Cardinal Pericle Felici that the conservative Quinn was (a la Hans Küng) "sowing confusion among the faithful." With an eye toward the demographic charts, some Third World bishops greeted the Quinn statement with a sigh of Excedrin relief. Exploding population in so many of these lands undercuts all efforts at achieving even minimal economic development for masses of the destitute. But others, especially from middle-income developing countries, resisted Archbishop Quinn's appeal. Why? Part of the reason is that in countries (India, for instance), bearing lots of children represents the only available form of old age security; the ban on artificial contraception serves as a weapon against over-eager state birth control programs that are not complemented by effective primary education and health care in the rural areas where the masses of the "absolute poor" live—or better, scratch out existence.

The term "absolute poor" is that of World Bank president Robert McNamara. Virtually coincident with the opening of the synod, McNamara was delivering his farewell speech, a *cri de coeur* for the world's forgotten poor, to the bank's Board of Governors. The concurrence of these two events draws attention to what may be the real loss in the American church's preoccupation with the relatively narrow issues raised by *Humanae Vitae*. In preparing for the synod, our bishop-delegates heard this, and heard it strongly put, by the directors of diocesan Family Life bureaus: that *Humanae Vitae* has unfortunately distracted us, and wasted an enormous amount of energy, on a bedroom choice—when it is the deteriorating state of the public world that makes the Christian project of the family so difficult to live out in the modern world—for very different reasons in different geographies.

As Jean Bethke Elshtain so well pointed out in our pages recently [Aug. 1], the genesis of a *human* being depends on the capacity of parents to instill in the nerves and blood of a child a basic trust in life. Without such bio-psychological communication at an early stage of growth, Christian faith, and *eo ipso* Christian sacramental marriage, become a virtual dead letter. But the point is, continued Elshtain, "parents who are frustrated and demeaned, rendered helpless in worklife and citizenship, will have great difficulty instilling such bedrock beliefs, ways of being, inside the family. . . ." Put simply, this means we cannot talk of building the kind of family Christianity finds essential without addressing the economic and political issues of unjust and just societies. The family is thus a superb topic for *seeing* and understanding the intersection of spirituality and social action—and we expect the bishops to return home with an awakened sense of this interconnection.

In particular, we hope the American delegation will have heard their brothers in the Third World speaking out for people "with no voice," and return determined to set an agenda of global responsibility for American Catholic families—the kind of agenda that a successfully assimilated, and yet dispirited, American church has been waiting for since the close of Vatican II and the election of a Catholic president.

The irony may be that former Defense Secretary McNamara studied Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* ("The Development of Peoples") more diligently than most American Catholics have. (In fact, when that encyclical appeared in 1967, McNamara had copies distributed to every division of the World Bank as the "best rationale" he had yet seen for the bank's work and goals.) In his address to the Board of Governors on September 30, McNamara was trying to convince the member governments and their bankers that even by standards of strictly economic self-interest, even without figuring the moral imperative, planning and programs for economic growth in the age of energy scarcity must address the issues of human resource development—and hence the structural social inequities in the distribution of education (especially for women), primary health care, basic nutrition. Under McNamara's tenure, the World Bank has downgraded its lending for high technology projects and enormously increased its lending for less splashy projects in primary education, rural health delivery systems, and "appropriate" small-scale technology for the rural poor. Education, it turns out, serves as a better constraint on the birth rate in underdeveloped countries than does the Pill. And of course the enormous increase in lending for such projects, and McNamara's impatience to launch them, have incurred sharp criticism—on the score of the "sins" of haste, inadequate pre-planning, and assessment. Faced with 800 million "absolute poor"—people so limited by malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, high infant mortality, and low life expectancy as to be below human decency—McNamara's sins of haste are forgivable.

More, his challenge to the industrial and OPEC nations to realize that anti-poverty programs will not wait for, but are indeed integral to the solution of the world's financial dislocations, makes sense. For it is poverty, not OPEC or the Communist bloc, that constitutes the principal source of the world's social instability—and the trend to violent eruption. More, the fact is that capital formation explains less than a third of the variation in growth rates among developing nations. The other more than two-thirds is accounted for by differences in human resource development. People whose brains are damaged by malnutrition, who can't read or write, who are chronically sick and weak, do not produce—and also bear more children than their healthy, literate, well-fed counterparts in the developed world. The great temptation of industrial, oil-importing nations at the present juncture is to say deficits can't wait; poverty can. But in terms of the consequent social "destabilization" and lowered productivity (without which the poorer world cannot pay back its borrowing from the rich), says McNamara, nationalistic austerity policies toward overseas aid make no sense.

Most likely, the American bishops at the synod are hearing the same message. It should inspire them to return home and put that message across in their local churches. According to the ecclesiology of Vatican II, a bishop is responsible, not just for his own diocese, but for the whole church. So far, that's been a bright idea awaiting a programmatic follow-through. Our nation, the richest in the world, remains, relative to GNP, the lowest donor of foreign development assistance among all the industrial nations.

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BLACKS IN THE SOUTH

In the years since the civil rights marches public perception of the conditions in the South has been changing sharply. This is true not only among whites but also among blacks; indeed, there has been a certain amount of evidence that a number of blacks have reversed the old pattern and moved from the North back to the South they thought more congenial. But according to a recent report from the Southern Regional Council, the South has made little progress since the 1950s in narrowing the economic differences between blacks and whites. Indeed, the differences in income between black Southerners and white Southerners are in some instances larger than they were thirty years ago.

The median income for black men in eleven Southern states in 1950 was 58 percent of that for white men. By 1975 the median figure for black men had dropped to 57 cents for every dollar made by white men. For black women the situation improved, although their overall situation was worse. The median pay for black women rose from 25 percent of what white men earned in 1950 to 29 percent in 1975. Southern white women, on the other hand, lost ground: they dropped from a median income in 1950 that was 44 percent of the figure for white men to a level of 40 percent in 1975. The gain in income for black women helped improve the relative position of black families slightly, from 56 percent of that of a white family to 62 percent, a gain, however, of less than one-fourth of one percent a year. In short, as the Council's research director put it, "While the social and political barriers of the South have been reduced to a large extent, economic barriers and problems in the 1980s will be faced by blacks in about the same relative position with whites as existed for the parents and grandparents of those blacks thirty years ago."

Report from Britain

LABOR & THE NUKES

MORE WICKED THAN OBSCENE

TWENTY YEARS ago, the most energetic force in British politics was the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, with its slogan "Ban the Bomb." Its primary aim was to persuade Britain to give up its own "independent" nuclear deterrent. The campaign very nearly captured the commanding heights of the Labor party, and was only defeated by the efforts of the right-wing leadership of the party, under Gaitskell, to defy the wishes of the Labor party conference. (One important long-term consequence of that defeat has been the slow emergence of a campaign, led by Tony Benn, to "democratize" the party by ensuring that the decisions of the grass-roots workers in the party, who are far more effectively represented at the annual conference than they are ever likely to be in Parliament, have a much greater say in the shaping of official party policy than they have at present.)

Today, in 1980, history is partly repeating itself. The nuclear issue is once again emerging into the forefront of British politics: and once again it is dividing the Labor party. The Parliamentary Labor party and the leaders of many of the big unions (notably the Engineering union) are ranged on the pro-nuclear side, while the constituency parties and a minority of the members of Parliament, plus a large number of voluntary organizations loosely linked to the party and sympathetic to its anti-Tory purposes, form the core of the anti-nuclear campaign. And it seems to me that the likely upshot of it all will be the same: despite all the efforts, a failure to turn the nuclear weapons issue into the crucial issue in British politics, and perhaps disintegration of the Labor party into the bargain.

Most of the recent attention has been paid to the question of siting cruise missiles in Britain, and to the decision to bring the British deterrent up to date by buying the Trident system from America. Given the fundamental insularity and provinciality of British politics since the loss of Empire, this may have looked a right tactic on the part of the anti-nuclear campaign. The blatant contradiction between drastic cuts in public expenditure and the decision to buy Trident created an obvious target for attack and agitation. Yet in my own view, it has been a mistaken tactic in so far as it has allowed the impression to get about that the anti-nuclear campaign is essentially inward-looking and selfish. By contrast, it is possible to present NATO and the ideology of the military/industrial complex as internationalist and outgoing: the spending of money Britain can ill afford in order to take its due part in a self-sacrificial strategy for the defense of freedom.

Perhaps the most difficult thing in British politics is to force a foreign-policy issue into the forefront of political debate. Only very occasionally, as in the case of Suez, has such an issue since the war preoccupied attention for more than a passing moment, and taken the British mind off wages, prices, and jobs. This is why the attempt of people such as E. P. Thompson, to turn the nuclear debate into an essentially international one—a matter of the survival of European civilization rather than of the British standard of living—is so important. But it is also why one has to admit that it has a long way to go before it can get anywhere near to success.

Thompson's contribution to the current debate began with the publication of a pamphlet called "Protest and Survive." The title will only make sense when it is understood that the government had recently issued a pamphlet of its own, called "Protect and Survive." The latter was part of the current government campaign to promote "civil defense"—which the anti-nuclear groups tend to regard as simply a fraud designed to make the idea of a winnable nuclear war more acceptable. Pro-deterrence thinkers prefer to look on such campaigns as simply part of the credibility of deterrence itself. That is to say, investment in civilian shelters is just another way of saying to the Russians that our readiness to carry out, and face the consequences of, our threat to wipe out the other side, is still

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unshaken despite the shakiness of much else in the Western camp.

Thompson's attack, however, was not upon government policy in the narrow field of civil defense, or even upon the decision to permit the cruise missiles and to buy the Trident. It was an attack on the whole concept of mutual deterrence and the nuclear arms race: and more positively it has raised again, as a genuine alternative policy, the idea of a nuclear-free Europe. "Nuclear-free zones" have, of course, been part of the currency of strategic debate for a good many years: but it is a long time since the idea, as applied to the European continent from Britain to the Russian border, has been seriously discussed as an option. One of the strong points of the nuclear-free zone idea is that it gets away from the silly and sterile polarization of "unilateral" versus "multi-lateral" disarmament. For far too long that has been presented, especially in the popular mind, as being the only choice before us: either to trust in the current processes of negotiation, despite the fact that these have done little other than allow the arms race to continue, or simply to give up and let the Russians in. What Thompson has tried to do is to present credibly and forcefully a genuine alternative strategy which would give both sides what they want, i.e., greater, rather than less security. (Surely one of the stupidest things about the idea of deterrence by threat of total destruction, is that it expects people to behave in a sane and rational fashion, calculating in a spirit of rational self-interest, just at the point when they have been deliberately frightened to death by the other side.)

The adjectives most often applied to Thompson's brilliant style of political polemic are "passionate" and "rational." That is to say, what marks his contribution off from that of others is its combination of merciless rational argumentation and passionate sense of personal conviction. The combination of the two is relatively rare, especially in this field of debate. Pacifism, even nuclear pacifism, has long been regarded in the media and elsewhere as worthy and sincere but "wet": part of an emotional approach to politics, and an idealistic vision of the world, which is to be respected in its adherents but not taken seriously by anybody else. By contrast, the military strategists have often been presented, along with such supposedly hard-headed realists as Mrs. Thatcher, as having all the rational arguments on their side, but (perhaps) not enough emotional compassion or humanity. Now, along comes a fiercely committed and eloquent campaigner who seems to combine both.

Of course, Thompson is routinely attacked by some as a "Marxist"—which means, in this kind of context, a sort of traitor. True, he was one of the original group around the *New Left Review* in the fifties and early sixties: the author of massive historical works on William Morris (*From Romantic to Revolutionary*) and on *The Making of the English Working Class*. But he is really, beneath any appearances which may be suggested by such titles, a libertarian and scourge of all hard-faced orthodoxies: one who is much given to exposing what he has called "The Poverty of Theory," and to claiming allegiance to the spirit of William Blake rather than to that of "scientific" politics of any shade or color.

Thus, it has been hard for those who disagree with him, but wish to meet him on equal terms, to avoid having to think very hard and rationally about the alternatives he poses. Conor Cruise O'Brien, for example (the current editor of the *Observer* Sunday newspaper) has been forced on the defensive when trying to find some middle way between full endorsement of the Thompson line and full endorsement of the government and NATO line. It is one of the values of Thompson's contribution that he has put the pro-nuclearists on the defensive—at least in argument. (They are far from defensive in their commitment to what they quaintly call "defense." Oh, for the good old days when the government department concerned was called, not "The Ministry of Defense—an Orwellian term if ever there was one—but "The War Office"!)

Yet I would personally say that there is one element lacking even in Thompson's armory of debate and argument: and this is the truly moral dimension. And it is here, perhaps, that the Catholic Christian contribution can be made to tell. I mean the recognition that, at bottom, what is wrong with the nuclear weapons strategy is, quite simply, that it is *wicked*. That is to say, the deepest illusion, of the many on which nuclear strategy is founded, is the illusion that human beings are *permitted* to take that way out of their political dilemmas. Let me illustrate what I mean.

The currency of debate on nuclear weapons, common to both sides, is very largely esthetic. I mean, the concepts which go proxy for genuine moral argument tend to be those of esthetic revulsion. Everybody admits that nuclear war would be "obscene," "horrible," "disgusting," etc.: and many people would even go so far as to admit that nuclear weapons are themselves subject to the same epithets. Nobody denies that nuclear war would be catastrophic, a blot on civilization, etc. What very few people are prepared to see—on either side—is that this sort of language is just not good enough; not powerful enough to stop the race to the brink. The only conceptual apparatus that is powerful enough to do the job is one in which words like "illicit," "impermissible," and "wicked" are part of the common coin of discourse. What the debate needs, in my view, is to restore the sense that some kinds of behavior are not just "monstrous" or "obscene," but are actually *disallowed*, in the sense that they are infringements of a law which will certainly not go unpunished. That such a conceptual framework can only be constructed on a basis of belief in a God who legislates and punishes is no argument for not recognizing our need for it.

While there is not much sign yet of a revival of such language in the nuclear debate, there is at least some hope of it, in the fact that at last significant numbers of people in the tradition of Catholic moral thinking are coming round to the anti-nuclear position. This is perhaps one point where history is not repeating itself. For in the debate of the late fifties and sixties—with a few eccentric exceptions—Catholic participation was notably absent. Official opposition, for example by the hierarchy as a whole, to government policy on nuclear deterrence was a barely thinkable possibility. But today—

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despite a fairly flabby comment by the bishops in their response to the recent National Pastoral Congress on this matter—the possibility is quite thinkable, and in the not too distant future even likely. Certainly, the idea that the permanent Secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament should be a Catholic priest (and one-time secretary to Cardinal Heenan to boot!) would have been greeted with unbelieving laughter in 1960—yet today, it is a fact, and one of the most hopeful facts in the whole equation.

To come back to the beginning: where does all this leave the Labor party? Well: divided. This will become apparent in a significant way when the party meets for its annual conference. Will history repeat itself, with a majority of resolutions and individuals on the anti-nuclear side, but the weight of Parliamentary and big union opinion on the other? And will the outcome of all this be simply a drab compromise, easily presented in the media as a clash of abstractions (left vs. right) or of personalities (Callaghan vs. Benn)? I do not reckon to offer a prognostication on this question which may be settled by the time this is read; but I invite *Commonweal* readers to read the papers and ponder what they say on the topic.

BRIAN WICKER

(Brian Wicker is Commonweal's regular correspondent in Great Britain.)

Of several minds: *Frank Getlein*

THE EMPEROR'S PLANES

WHO STEALTH MY PURTH STEALTH TRATH

AS YOU WOULD have expected if you'd thought about it a minute, the press got everything backwards in regard to the dread leak of the dread news of our dread secret weapon, the invisible airplane code-named "Stealth."

The Carterites—I guess there's no dispute about this—handed out the dread secret through their political Secretary of Defense—has there ever been some other kind?—and were immediately accused by the Reaganites of using war information for political advantage, horrid thought. Whereupon, statesman Jody Powell reared back and allowed as how the mere accusation of his master's using war information for political purposes served the nation ill, gave the Russians one jump up and was beyond the beyonds of civilized political discourse, something he must have heard about on the telly when he got some PBS colonial replay of some BBC think-'em-up by mistake while looking for *Hee-Haw*.

The press enthusiastically went along with both sides of the controversy. Indeed the leak gave the Russians the tip they needed to start now to counter the fearful *Stealth* airplane and indeed the Republicans, by raising the issue, gave the Russians the emphasis they need to realize something is important. They are Russians, after all, the same people who signed up in 1939 as part of Hitler's New Order, who fearlessly fought off the invasion of the Motherland by the fierce Finns, Russians who have since turned back threats by the Hungarians, the Poles and the Czechs against socialist solidarity, have bravely defended that same old Motherland from threats of the Afghanistani, of all people: you really have to keep your eyes peeled. Suddenly here were the Russians threatened by Tom Swift and his invisible airplane, or George Brown and his invisible Tom Swift, or the airplane and its invisible George Brown, or some other combination.

No matter how you slice it, boys, you can't see what you're slicing and that's the beauty of it—the invisible beauty, but the beauty no less; Shelley would have understood.

So would every airplane contractor, every war contractor, in the country, every three-card monte merchant on old Broadway. Quelle bonanza! It's pennies from heaven and not just pennies, big buckeroos, heavy moolah, substantial simoleans, Stealth, the invisible airplane, is potentially the most profitable thing to happen to flying ships since Eastern got the grabs on the New York-Washington run.

No wonder the Joint Chiefs got their chieftainship out of joint when the news was leaked by their superchief.

Tom Swift's Invisible Airplane, on which, apparently, the future survival of this country rests, is presented as the last-word in the dialogue between the Soviet Union and the United States. Roughly translated, that last word is, Gotcha! Followed by: You wanta surrender now or will tomorrow be more convenient? Hey?

Offhand, I can't think of anyone over the age of primary readers of Tom Swift who remotely believes that will happen. What will happen instead is that after we have mortgaged Mis' Lillian to provide the down payment on the invisible airplanes, the CIA will leak a top-secret report showing that the Russians are perfecting a super-penetrating eye-beam which will allow them, after all, to see the invisible airplane. The Joint Chiefs will appear before the Military Handout Committees of both Houses, say, Sorry, fellows, but it's now going to take eight times as much as we thought to keep the Invisible Airplane Invisible. Just sign here, we'll fill in the amount. And then, after the Really Invisible Airplane cuts its swath through the Treasury, the CIA will leak yet another Eyes-Only-Burn-This-Now report that the Russians are working up a plan to explode high level clouds of powdered charcoal which, falling upon the Really Invisible Airplanes will make them all too visible and vulnerable. Back to the Handout Chairmen: If we could get a buyer for California and Massachusetts, we could afford the Really

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and Truly Invisible Airplane. *Da capo*.

And that's why the Chiefs were so mad at Brown for letting the cat out of the invisible bag. The Invisible Airplane was no more aimed at the Russians than has been any other superweapon. Like all its predecessors, the Invisible Airplane had one target: the Treasury. It did have one very special quality but that depended upon absolute secrecy. The quality lay in the showing. You bring out the Handout Chairmen to the secret base on your flying saloon from Andrews, pour them off the flight, trundle them up onto the viewing platform and whisper, Now here comes the Invisible Airplane. The chief Joint Chief surreptitiously steps on a floor button, much like that used to summon the butler, back at quarters, but this one activates the super sound deck and the hidden giant fans. As the noise of the jets rises to almost unbearable levels and the wind rises with it, the chief Chief points to the empty air and says with quiet pride: See, you can't see a thing. If I hadn't told you the Invisible Airplanes were going by, you'd have thought you were looking at nothing at all, right? Right, there, Field Marshal, 'swonderful, and as long as you're up, how about a splash of that noise-killer, talk about technological breakthroughs!

Had it not been for old blabbermouth Brown, the Chiefs could have carried on in their joint for years with everyone sworn to silence as to where the money was going. The Invisibility principle could have been applied prodigally in all directions: Invisible Tanks, Invisible Carriers, Invisible Volunteer Armies, Invisible Audits, Invisible Conflicts of Interest. Generations of Joint Chiefs yet unborn could have grown up, soldiered their way up the ladder and retired to sell invisibility back to their former comrades from snug harbors as chairmen and presidents of the proliferating branches of Invisible Enterprises, which for that matter, could even have staged Invisible Duck Hunts for Invisible Joint Chiefs, frustrating at last the hated and anti-American press.

All gone now. Thanks to what-a-pot-o'-me Brown, it's all out on the table. Press, public, and who knows how many nosy Congressional committees will be asking questions, demanding progress reports, even insisting on Invisibility Accountability forms, listing every quart of the invisibility potion turned out, so that any amounts used for invisible duck blinds, shotguns, and sporty chiefs would be noticed at once. A pity.

There's worse. Just as the only really unthinkable thought Herman Kahn ever had was the thought that funds for think tankers with their predestined thoughts about increased military budgets might somehow be cut off, so the only prospect that really terrorizes the Joint Chiefs has nothing to do with the Russians but with the terrifying possibility that somehow, some day, some nut in favor of peace is going to make it to the White House and there goes the ball game.

It is true that the closest that has come to being in recent years was Eugene McCarthy and that wasn't very close, but still it's a possibility and the Chiefs, after all, are paid to be prepared for the unlikeliest possibilities. The Invisible Airplane plays right into such a maniac's hands.

Since if there is one subject on which all presidential candidates lie it is peace, we may assume a genuine peace candidate would do so, too. Just as Jimmy Carter lied when he promised to cut defense spending, so the peace candidate would lie by promising ever increasing bucks for bangs. Then, once in office, he could stage War Hawk Days ever month, for Congressmen and citizens to line Main Street and watch our Invisible Legions roll by, meanwhile invisibly syphoning the money into social amelioration, mass transit, rebuilding the cities, education, health care, all those irrelevancies which get in the way of the true purposes of the modern superpower state, which is to impoverish its citizens so as to increase its ability to slaughter as many foreigners as possible as expensively as possible.

Poor Brown: a traitor to his class.

FRANK GETLEIN

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

ANOTHER KIND OF WITNESS

A GOOD WORD FOR AN ANTHOLOGY

ONE WINTER DAY several years ago my wife invited a young Jehovah's Witness into our house. It was bitterly cold outside, and Regina thought the young woman could warm up a bit before continuing her door-to-door walk through an unsympathetic neighborhood. So she asked her in, accepted copies of *Awake* and *The Watchtower*, and thought that would be the end of it. But the woman returned several times, bringing her husband with her once. Each time she brought up her religion and the importance of joining. Although Regina tried, with each visit, to make our lack of interest as apparent as she could and still be polite, she finally had to make it quite clear that we were Catholic and were not shopping around. The woman never came back.

There was something sad about this, because she had plainly wanted not only to convert us, but to be a friend. The two things—our conversion to her religion and genuine friendship—were inseparable for her.

Later, partly because of this experience, I picked up Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's *Visions of Glory: A History and a Memory of Jehovah's Witnesses* (Touchstone, $5.95). It was the story not only of Jehovah's Witnesses (which is, with Mormonism, one of America's most intriguing contributions to religion) but also a description of the effect of a cult on a particular person and her family. Barbara Grizzuti Harrison left Jehovah's Witnesses, and during the writing of her book surprised herself by becoming a Catholic, something she describes in the closing chapters. I found the book fascinating, and began to notice

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Harrison's work in a number of places, including the *New York Times*, *Harpers*, *The New Republic*, and (yes) *Commonweal*.

Some of her best journalism and criticism has now been collected in *Off Center* (The Dial Press, $9.95). I have to confess that I love collections. Publishers, I hear, tend not to. Anthologies are considered risky. I don't know why this should be—a collection is something you can move around in, and you can read something whole at a sitting. I almost threw a party when John Cheever's collected stories came out, two of Raymond Chandler's anthologies are among my favorite books, and Eudora Welty's *The Eye of the Story* delighted me. Even Gay Talese had a good one out, years ago, called *Fame and Obscurity*.

Off Center is a selection which is as varied as could be. There are pieces on Moonies, Dick Cavett, hypochondria, Jane Fonda, famous writers, and Roseland. There are a lot of journalists who write about people like Jane Fonda, but few who would say "I have never met anyone who exerted so little energy to be charming." Or, "On the flight to L.A. (economy class—millionaire Fonda disdains first-class frills) Jane told me more than I wanted to hear about the multinational corporations, and less than I already knew."

But taking on the sham in Jane Fonda is relatively easy, though it is done here very well. It is not so easy to see clearly what is false in a writer who has been as universally praised, by good reviewers, as Joan Didion has. I like Didion's writing, especially her essays, and was not prepared for this opening: "When I am asked why I do not find Joan Didion appealing, I am tempted to answer—not entirely facetiously—that my charity does not naturally extend itself to someone whose lavender love seats match exactly the potted orchids on her mantel, someone who has porcelain elephant end tables, someone who has chosen to burden her daughter with the name Quintana Roo; I am disinclined to find endearing a chronicler of the 1960s who is beset by migraines that can be triggered by her decorator's having pleated instead of gathered her new dining room curtains. These, and other assorted facts—such as the fact that Didion chose to buy the dress Linda Kasabian wore at the Manson trial at I. Magnin in Beverly Hills—put me more in mind of a neurasthenic Cher than of a writer who has been called America's finest prose stylist."

This looks like the opening slash in a fight which will leave a gory mess all over the floor, but it is much more than that: Harrison makes good points about the things that are wrong with Didion's prose, and is most concerned with the political conservatism and moral emptiness of the attitudes which crop up again and again in Didion's work; no one else seems to have paid much attention to them, perhaps because we want to believe that life is as hollow as Didion suggests it is.

She is equally sharp in her reaction to the extremism and intolerance of Adrienne Rich's brand of feminism. Harrison is a feminist, but is irritated by Rich's anti-male oversimplifications: "My reading of Ms. Rich's book," she says, "does not even tell me whether I may assume there are any qualitative differences between my son—poised on the brink of adulthood, scared, brave, kind, uncertain—and Idi Amin." There is a review of Linda Bird Francke's *The Ambivalence of Abortion* which will bother both pro-choice and pro-life people, an indication that she is on the right track; and her review of Marshall Frady's *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* challenges the notion that Graham is an innocent in a world too complex and ambiguous for his simplicity. According to Harrison, Frady reveals, despite himself, Graham's "desire to ingratiate that is so profound as to amount to cunning, a pragmatism that stems from a lust to be Caesar's buddy, to share Caesar's power." In the course of her story on the Moonies she makes a statement which could open into a book: "If we deny the validity of all absolutes, we leave the field open to mischievous charlatans and psychopaths—like Jim Jones, and, some would say, Sun Myung Moon. We ought instead to recognize that longing for the transcendental is a reality of the human condition, and not one to be scorned. We have to stop being embarrassed by religion before we can come to grips with the cults."

Apart from essays which reveal a keen critical eye and a way of seeing through received ideas, there is a tender appreciation of her son, a recollection of her Jehovah's Witness girlhood, a funny, sad piece about her hypochondria, and many more good things. Through all of them there is a sense, or rather a compassionate commitment to the fact, that ideas matter too much to be dealt with in a sloppy or lazy fashion, because people are implicated in ideas, and are wounded by bad ones.

So much writing validates our culture uncritically. I am talking about the sort of thing *People* does for movie stars, and reviewers at another level do when they call every third novel the greatest book of the decade. It is nice to see something sharper at work. Gloria Emerson is quoted on the jacket of *Off Center*: "She is never pompous, coy, or dull; what always shines through is wit, intelligence, and compassion." It is good to have this book, and good to know, from the jacket, that Harrison is at work on another.

JOHN GARVEY

Joseph Payne Brennan

Dust

The dust in this deserted room,
disturbed,
swirls in a ray of random sun,
hangs, settles,
more silent than death.

This cryptic dust, I tell myself,
came from the ends of the universe
a billion years ago,
through inconceivable black voids,
through immensities of time
we speak about but never comprehend.

Down the long centuries of light
it glided toward this room.
Now it lies quietly, gilded by sun.

In this one moment of peace
it bears the richness of diamonds,
every mote precise as memory.

I close the door quietly
on the whole past of the universe
waiting to be born again.

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How I am voting

As in past presidential years, Commonweal *has asked supporters of the various candidates for personal statements explaining their choices. Thomas E. Cronin is a political scientist, author, and consultant on political leadership and public policymaking. The author of* The State of the Presidency *(Little, Brown), he is currently Director of the Direct Democracy Research Project at Colorado College. Michael Novak is a theologian, syndicated columnist, and Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington. Richard C. Wade is an urban historian at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and the author of* The Urban Frontier *(Harvard University Press) and* Slavery in the Cities *(Oxford University Press). All three are previous contributors to* Commonweal.

A KENNEDY DELEGATE IN CARTER'S CAMP

THOMAS E. CRONIN

FOR THE FIRST three-and-a-half years in office, a president is judged against the textbook model of near-perfection. It is asked whether he has "solved" America's outstanding problems. Or he is measured against great leaders of the past, against the brilliance of a Jefferson, the courage of a Lincoln, the robust activism of the Roosevelts, the charm of a John F. Kennedy. But by the end of their first term, presidents are judged against a more mortal standard, namely the other canddidates who are available and running for the office.

Not surprisingly, Jimmy Carter looks better now than he did a year ago.

Carter has not been a popular president. His personal style is underwhelming. He is a poor orator and an indifferent coalition-builder. A year ago I shared enough of the general dissatisfaction with the Carter presidency to look for an alternative candidate. I found one, and as a delegate to the Democratic convention I supported Edward Kennedy. Senator Kennedy is no longer a candidate, and I have no doubt, as we select a president for what will surely be a crucial time of testing for America, who is now the best choice.

Has President Carter "solved" the nation's ills? Hardly. Could any president have? Leading journalists of our day, perhaps because they are almost all Washingtonians, charged with watching the White House fulltime, persist in putting this burden on the president. Illustrative is this generalization by Haynes Johnson in his recent book *In the Absence of Power:* "Only a president can articulate a national purpose and explain national issues, and in our system only a president can serve as public educator for the nation."

Doesn't this demote Congress, as well as relieve it of responsibility? Doesn't this make us overly dependent on one person? Will these pundits also say about a President Reagan that only he can explain our national issues and serve as public educator? My own view is that we need all the leadership we can get from presidents, but are even more in need of a *nation* of leaders, say 500,000 or more, in business, local government, unions, universities, and so on, who will serve as policy-clarifiers, agenda-setters, and renewers of national purpose. A healthy society, John Gardner has written, "should be able to function well with good rather than great leaders." That is what Jimmy Carter has been; and if it has not been enough it may reflect more on the health of the society than on him.

In fact, Carter has often tried to talk of national purposes; but it is his fate to be president when such talk comes hard: during a time of worldwide economic dislocation and a time when the nation yearns for austerity. Carter gets blamed for failing to provide an inspiring ideology, but what other presidents have really done this? He is blamed for betraying liberalism, but let it be noted he was decidedly not the liberal candidate in the 1976 Democratic primaries; and while he has always been a liberal in some respects, the extent of his conservativism (which had a good deal to do with his '76 victory) has always been widely recognized, even when liberals preferred to wish it away. Carter gets blamed for not being a national planner, but let it be pointed out that by and large the

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country is not ready to allow a president to serve as a national planner.

Jimmy Carter is a man of caution and compromise. He is so by nature. He is so because he understands the limits of the presidency. He recognizes the backlash to government, but he has tried to master it, not surrender to it. He has steadfastly opposed both the Proposition-13 mentality and constitutional proposals to limit spending or force a balanced budget. And he has been, as circumstances virtually compel a president to be today, an unpopular bearer of bad news.

LIKE MANY OTHER people I have a number of specific policy differences with the president, on the MX missile system, draft registration, nuclear power, and so on. But I also see solid reasons why he should be reelected:

1. Carter has kept us out of war. With the exception of the abortive Iranian rescue, he has displayed praiseworthy restraint in international affairs. There have been no more Vietnams—and unlike Governor Reagan, Jimmy Carter does not believe Vietnam was "a noble cause."

2. In practical terms he has had success in dealing with the Chinese, Israel, Egypt, Panama, and most of our allies. He deserves credit for pushing SALT II, a measure I think he can successfully get ratified in a second term.

3. He is a thoughtful, hardworking, and decent person. There have been no Watergates, no enemies lists, and no Gulf of Tonkins. Carter sponsored a measure for full financial disclosure for all high-ranking government officials. He appointed inspectors general in every major federal agency. Carter is also his own man. In fact many of the complaints about his administration arise precisely because he is not controlled by the unions, big business, the military, Congress, the bureaucracy, or even the South. None of these interests can ever consider him sufficiently "safe." Carter is a disciplined person who thinks independently and has avoided rigidity.

4. Carter has made excellent appointments. There is some validity to the criticism that Carter has remained unduly loyal to his Georgian staffers, but it fails to recognize the able people he has brought into government. Among the Georgians themselves, individuals like Jack Watson and Stuart Eizenstat would be welcome and outstanding members of any White House staff. And for every Georgian there are two or three Robert Strausses, Charles Schultzes, or Lloyd Cutlers. Carter chose Walter Mondale and has not only used him effectively as an individual but has integrated Mondale's able staff with his own. Perhaps a minor achievement but one, it might be noted, where almost all Carter's predecessors have failed.

Carter's ambassadorial appointments have been similarly praised—Mike Mansfield in Japan, Leonard Woodcock in China, Kingman Brewster in Great Britain, William Shannon in Ireland, to name just four. He appointed wise and seasoned veterans such as Vance, Brown, and Califano to his cabinet. Donald Kennedy, his first F.D.A. administrator, Judge William Webster, head of the F.B.I., and Paul Warnke as chief SALT negotiator, were also all excellent choices, as have been Carter appointees to federal regulatory commissions.

Carter is rightly proud to have appointed more women, blacks, and Hispanics to top administrative positions than all previous presidents. He helped formulate and get passed the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 that should make it easier to reward outstanding civil servants and bring abler people into the upper reaches of the executive branch. Carter has lost some good people from his administration, but he has cared about, worked very hard on, and generally succeeded with the personnel side of his job. It is not a headline-grabbing aspect of the presidency (except when there's a scandal or someone resigns) but it affects the quality of crucial government performance for millions.

The next president may have three or four or even five nominations to make the Supreme Court, including that for Chief Justice. It has been said that Eisenhower's appointment of Earl Warren was about the most important domestic decision made during all the 1950s—and perhaps it was. Carter's recruitment and appointments to the judiciary at the lower levels have been widely praised, and deservedly so.

5. Carter has not succeeded in economic policy, but he has resisted the worst of the "bumper sticker" solutions that are now so prevalent. The plain fact is that the science of economics is in a state of confusion and the politics of economics has made it an uphill battle for the administration to achieve even those liberal measures it felt confident about.

Here again, Carter should not be measured against some ideal but against the available alternatives. John Anderson has distinguished himself with his proposal of a fifty-cent tax on each gallon of gasoline, a Rube Goldberg scheme that ducks the real issue and works a severe hardship on those poor and working-class employees who must travel any significant distance to their jobs. Anderson's other economic proposals are similar in spirit to Carter's with the difference that, as an out-of-office "free-lancer," he has had the liberty to draw them up without attending to any political constituencies and the likelihood of their actually being translated into law.

Reagan, on the other hand, does have a different approach. Under the banner of free choice and incentives, he would redistribute income and wealth, in a broad and rather indiscriminate way, from lower-income groups to the well-to-do, in order to create a suitable climate for investment and productivity. Whether his scheme would work in the long run even to strengthen the economy, let alone compensate today's losers, no one really knows. We do know who would bear the immediate burden.

6. Carter is a Democrat, not a Republican. Yes, that is a partisan reason, but it is also based on what the two parties' stand for in 1980. The Republican platform rejects the Equal Rights Amendment, encourages nuclear power, makes job-creation subsidiary to fighting inflation, signals its attitude toward energy conservation in an indulgent dismissal of the

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55-mile-per-hour speed limit, would freeze federal spending to a percentage of GNP, would lower the minimum wage for youth, opposes public financing of congressional campaigns and the SALT II treaty. The Democratic platform is militant on the E.R.A., guarded about nuclear power (advocating that it be phased out as soon as possible and placed under strict safety controls meanwhile), stresses job-creation, opposes balanced-budget amendments to the Constitution, opposes lowering the youth minimum wage, favors the federal speed limit, national health insurance, public financing for congressional campaigns, and ratification of SALT II.

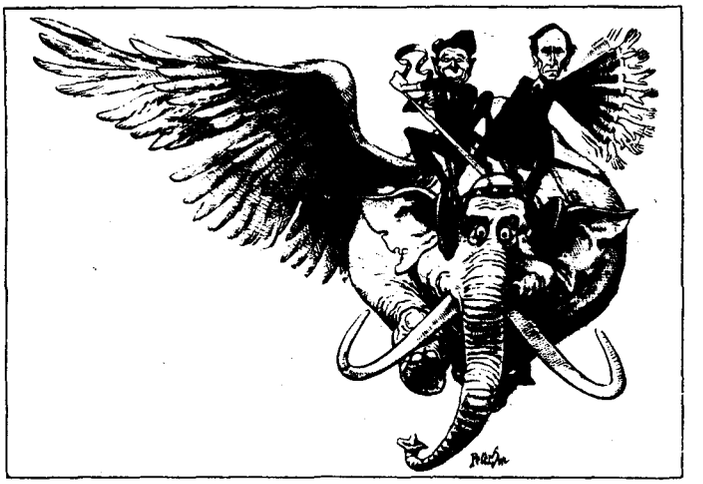
MANY AMERICANS complain that, like many presidents, Carter may not live up to his party's platform. At the same time, they actively *hope* that Reagan won't live up to his. the candidates' starting points are so different that what is seen as a vice in Carter is rendered a virtue in Reagan.

What is seen as inconsistency in Carter the president is noted as flexibility and moderation in Reagan the candidate. Thus Reagan made his emphasis on tax cuts the keynote of his campaign, the link with New Deal concern for the "little man" and supposed contrast to Carter stand-pattism. Since then, under pressure from the Republican establishment, Reagan has signaled his return to orthodox G.O.P. economics. While Carter is praised for his judicial appointments, Reagan is given credit for the possibility that he may not be as ideologically rigid in such appointments as his party's platform suggests. Having condemned aid to cities like New York, Reagan now announces a change of heart. And of course there is the "two Reagan's" policy toward China.

John Anderson, in contrast, has been an articulate spokesman for civil and women's rights, who deserves respect for criticizing mindless tax cuts and the wasteful MX missile system. On taxing and spending matters, he is still a Republican, and on foreign policy questions he comes very close to Carter's positions. All this is of lesser importance than the fact that the greatest effect of his candidacy may well be to siphon off enough votes in New York, Oregon, Wisconsin, Connecticut, and a few other places to ensure Ronald Reagan's victory in the Electoral College.

7. Carter has attempted to reduce paperwork and federal regulations. He has embraced and sponsored several deregulation measures, for airlines, railroads, and trucking. At the same time, he has served the environment well, setting aside wilderness areas as a public preserve. His attitudes on environmental preservation and occupational health and safety are markedly different from those of his G.O.P. adversaries.

WE ARE OBSESSED with greatness but should be pleased enough with goodness. The disappointments of the Carter presidency have been exaggerated. Jeff Fishel of American University has looked closely at Carter's policy pledges and his subsequent policy actions, and he concludes that Carter has remained fairly faithful to his convictions and commitments. Fishel writes: "Carter's domestic agenda in office during the first two years was strongly, not perfectly, consistent with



what was promised during the campaign." And students of presidential-congressional relations report—also contrary to conventional wisdom—that Carter's record of success in Congress is well above average for recent presidents.

The times are complex: Our economy—shaped by Republicans as much as by Democrats—is more interdependent with those of other nations than ever before. Our oil dependency, virtually ignored by Republicans for eight years, has tremendously complicated the economic and national security challenges for a president. Our television coverage of presidents, in my view, serves to level and weaken them. Congressional relations grow more complicated with the increasing power of single-issue constituencies.

Carter, to repeat, is a man of caution and compromise—and also of compassion. He deserves reelection, not the mindless and condescending contempt so often visited upon him by people with unfair, unrealistic, and misguided standards for judging presidential performance. In the fact of Carter's failures, much harsh humor has been expended upon the title of his autobiography, *Why Not the Best?* But the plain truth is that on November 4, of the realistic alternatives before us in the voting booth, Jimmy Carter is the best.

A SWITCH TO REAGAN: FOR A STRONG AMERICA

MICHAEL NOVAK

MY RECORD on supporting presidential candidates is such a poor one that I don't know why anyone would care. Early in 1968, I joined a candlelight demonstration signing petitions for Eugene McCarthy to appear on the California ballot, but then after Indiana and Nebraska, switched to Robert Kennedy, just in time to help him lose in Oregon (where I stumped for him and learned the right and the wrong way to pronounce "Oregon"). Then after Kennedy died and Humphrey was nominated, I wrote urging anti-war

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Democrats not to support Hubert Humphrey, even though that meant Nixon might win, on the grounds that we needed to rebuild the party for 1972. In 1972, accordingly, I took a year's leave of absence to help any Democrat get elected, working first for Muskie and then after the convention, for McGovern. (I even tried to interview Donald Segretti's father privately, in Italian, to try to break the Watergate case, but failed.)

To be sure, my reasoning seems more consistent to me than it may to others. After the Democratic convention in Chicago in 1968, on which I reported for *Commonweal*, I determined that the Democratic party needed to be built up around its working-class and ethnic base. The righteousness and upper class bias of the left had bothered me in the McCarthy campaign. In Gary and in Omaha, Bobby Kennedy had sounded the notes I thought important—crime, a coalition of working class whites and blacks, a strong international position. What Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., thought of as "the bad Bobby" is the one I liked. Much as I admired McCarthy, I did not like his claim that the educated and the sensitive supported him. In 1972, I wanted Muskie, who more and more sounded like McGovern, until McGovern is what we got. I worked extremely hard for McGovern, the party, and for Mr. Shriver, at a high cost to my family, for which we are still paying, but by the end was disgusted with the left. I joined the Coalition for a Democratic Majority after the election.

For 1975, out of loyalty and esteem, I supported Sargent Shriver (whose moves to the left disappointed me) but told Jimmy Carter, who asked to see me in July 1975, that he'd do very well and I'd be glad to support him if Shriver failed. By April of 1976, I began to think that Jimmy Carter didn't have any vision of what he wanted to do, was naive, and might prove to be both incompetent and a fraud. In a certain desperation—the Soviet threat being very much on my mind, and the deterioration in the position of Israel and the entire Mid-East, too—I flew to Pennsylvania to help Senator Jackson in that critical primary. Whereupon Jackson lost. Most of my CDM friends supported Carter; I could not. In the fall, I remained publicly neutral but privately rooted for Ford, who lost.

Not long ago, in recognition of my efforts (which had, alas, been observed by others) Bill Brock gave me an award as the Republican's Favorite Democrat, but on condition that I would never endorse a Republican, even mentally. Events have forced me, despite myself, to return his award since I can no longer honor its condition.

I begin from the fact that I cannot tolerate the thought of another four years of Jimmy Carter. My reasons are not like those of the Kennedy supporters; viz., that Carter is not "liberal" enough. My objections are not to his ideology. I wish he had one—and were good at it. If one supposes that Carter is (or is not, it hardly matters) a good man at heart, but wholly lacking in a *governing idea*, with almost no skills at the tasks of government (as opposed to those of public relations and electioneering), it is not hard to figure out what he will do next. He will always do the thing which (a) makes him look most pious, to one constituency or another; and (b) most helps to counter whatever damaging perception of him is showing up in Pat Caddell's polls. Carter is forever looking into the mirror of his own vanity, trying to strike a profile in courage for someone or other. He is in love with his own "integrity"—and will do anything he needs to make it prevail, you can depend on it. He is a dirty, mean campaigner. Those who remember his gratuitous pettiness toward Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson in 1976 came to understand for themselves the sleazy history of Carter's earlier Georgia campaigns. His recent assault on Governor Reagan's "racism" (orchestrated over several weeks through present and former cabinet officials and the Rafshoon agency) was, typically, below the belt.

I like a touch of sulphur in a candidate, so it is not Carter's hardball politics that offends me. It is the pious front he puts on it. Nor is this merely a matter of temperament or style. It carries over into his foreign policy. Carter gives the world piety and love with both barrels. He embraced the Shah in January 1978, and told him how Jimmy Carter and yes, the people of Iran, "love" their Shah (both about equally, as events of 1978-1979 later showed). When brother Jimmy loves you is the time to be on guard. Personality aside, his policies have so reduced U.S. military capabilities around the world that danger spots are multiplying, wars are breaking out like hives, and the great climax Solzhenitsyn predicts draws nearer. Carter tries to please the left in foreign policy and the right on economic policy. With one foot in Georgia and one foot in Massachusetts, he feels pain right about Washington. During his administration, inflation has depleted the resources of each of us by some thirty percent. Our armed forces have deteriorated in readiness, trained manpower, state of repair, and deterrent value.

If some still doubt whether or not there is a "new class" in American life, they might inspect the Anderson constituency. Virtually overnight Anderson changed his politics to meet the specifications: even more to the left than Carter was on foreign policy and minority issues, faintly conservative on fiscal issues—just the right moralistic mix for educated persons who "think for themselves" and are "different." Anderson may be considered to be running for the presidency of a major college, on the irresistible grounds of being a former Republican with Kennedy-like positions who is a Certified Independent and a proven fundraiser. He is now Ivy League timber.

It is not easy for a Democrat, who means to remain one, to support Reagan openly. Most highly educated persons I meet, especially in the East, put him down severely and regard those who support him with horror. It is more pleasant just to keep one's mouth shut. As I write, recent polls suggest that Carter is slightly ahead of Reagan nationally and leading in key states like New York, Texas, Illinois and Pennsylvania; it looks like a Carter victory. Since I think that would be a disaster of major proportions, and since I admire Reagan's two basic positions, his approach, and his good sense, I would forever feel cowardly if I did not say publicly what I privately think.

Reagan was elected governor of California in the first election in which I took part in that state after moving to

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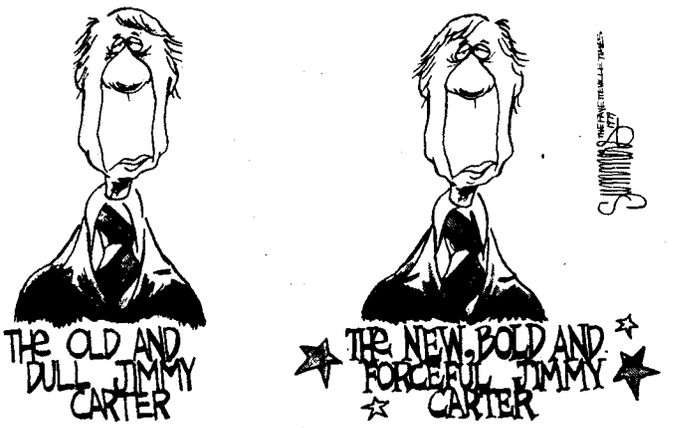
Stanford. I opposed him but thought the campaign against him was mean, unfair, and hysterical, especially among professors and educational leaders like Clark Kerr. Reagan struck me as far more intelligent than many who challenged him; I never saw him worsted in press conference, debate, or public dispute. He seemed to me more affable, decent, and commonsensical—less extremist, less paranoid—than those "liberals" who despised him. Although I had not quite formulated the concept, I was already offended by the highly educated new class, at that time liberal rather than radical. Indeed, radicalization in those days meant, first of all, rebellion against the "corporate liberalism" of the new experts.

Ideological resistance against Reagan softened during his two terms, but it always remained (and still remains) a liberal ritual to dismiss him as beneath serious consideration. I admired his pragmatism, sound government, and obvious executive skills. I remember the *New Republic* gloating that, beneath his conservative rhetoric, he was really, if one regarded his programs, a liberal in disguise. They called it hypocrisy. I thought it reflected the two sides of Reagan—the union organizer of his early years and the conservative turn of his later years. He was comfortable with political and economic principles from both traditions. He could make both work as an executive. He ran a good, relatively scandal-free, attractive, sound state government. He handed it over to Jerry Brown—as the latter was obliged to admit—in excellent fiscal shape.

The two central ideas on which the campaign of 1980 is being fought are military preparedness and economic policy. On both, Reagan's positions represent hope and those of Carter disaster. Carter has allowed the U.S. to lose military effectiveness in the Middle East. The collapse of Iran opened the door to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviets have massed twenty-seven divisions on the Iranian border; the 1,800 U.S. marines in the Indian Ocean are no credible deterrent. The Soviet-armed Iraqi are, as I write, marching into Iran. Weakness encourages war. The lesson seems to be so obvious. While Carter fiddles songs of peace, the structure of peace is collapsing. It will not be long before the U.S. itself is embroiled in Soviet-supported Marxist entanglements in Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, Jamaica, and perhaps El Salvador and Honduras. The pressure on Mexico and Venezuela will be great. To me, the situation, *mutatis mutandis*, is like that of the late 1930s. The issue is primarily one of conventional forces and clear insight into the aims of marxists of many varieties but one major international source of arms and aid. Reagan understands the present danger; Carter is at sea. The only way to prevent war is to be willing to resist Soviet probes. Reagan's policies show higher probabilities of peace than Carter's do. The American left, egging on the worst in Carter (Kennedy's stated views are even worse than Carter's), is leading the country into war with silly protestations of peace.

In economic matters, Carter's policies involve phenomenally high taxes on productivity and rapid descent into zero-sum factionalism. The pie will grow smaller and organized factions will fight for share of it. The Republicans—under Reagan, but not under Ford (whose advisors are undercutting Reagan and



Kemp)—are seizing the traditional Democratic position. They are concerned about a growing economy. That is surely the fundamental issue. The productive capacity of the United States must be set again on an upward track; otherwise, inflation and deterioration will slowly (or rapidly) destroy us.

On both these points, Reagan has occupied ground which the old ADA liberals used to hold: internationalism based on military preparedness and a highly productive economy. Carter has assumed the sad position of the old Republicans: isolationism based on weakness abroad and "balanced budget" economics (which, of course, he cannot effect without greater productivity).

In my view, the left was correct in its resistance to the war in Vietnam, but absorbed from that war the wrong lesson. Many on the left seem to regard a strong U.S. military presence, especially in well-equipped, fully staffed, operationally ready conventional forces, as the main enemy of world peace. The strategic vulnerability of the U.S. nuclear force is also a grievous worry. But the paramount issue is both the imbalance of conventional forces and the low state of operational readiness even of our outnumbered forces. The left minimizes Soviet superiority. That is a tragic error of judgment, as dreadful events will probably demonstrate. Those events can be prevented by strength and determination. It is unlikely that disarmament will prevent them. These, of course, are complex judgments. Each of us must choose where we stand. The left has been triumphant since Vietnam. The prognosis is bleak. For this reason, I stand with those who want to redress the errors of the last eight years (including the strategic retreat engineered by Nixon and Kissinger). Reagan is the only candidate we have. I wish he were younger and more experienced in Washington. But the alternatives—Carter and Anderson—seem to me far more dangerous.

PERHAPS it is only a Slavic sense of pessimism and gloom which afflicts me. I resonate strongly to the pessimism Solzehnitsyn bears with him from the Gulag. I believe he understands the real Marxism as our own marxists do not. The Soviet threat is as awesome as that of Hitler, first because it represents military forces greater than Hitler's (although Hitler was close to gaining a then unrivaled atomic power with intercontinental missiles), second because its internal

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worldview requires the suppression of liberty everywhere for its own perpetuity. How one interprets the meaning of the Soviet empire is the number one political issue of our generation. (Senator Kennedy's irrelevance is illustrated by his failure even to mention that issue at the Democratic convention.) It is not required that we resurrect the politics of the 1950s, but that we face the far grimmer realities ahead of us in the 1980s. We are now plummeting towards war because we are deceived by our own desire for peace. Peace is obtainable through the dangerous decade ahead only through intense efforts to arm ourselves. Facing strength, the Soviets will draw back. Facing our present weakness, they choose targets at their leisure. Surrogates are more useful to them than their own forces. That process must be halted, indeed reversed. They ought to be thrown on the defensive themselves for the next fifty years, if the world desires fifty years of peace.

There is a final reason why I prefer Reagan. Reagan is a builder, not a knocker. We've had fifteen years of contempt for our own political economy, this rare experiment among the world's nations. A British friend of mine commented that Reagan always tries to do and say the decent thing and generates feelings of health and purpose. He is a comfortable man. What you see is what you get. After the deceptiveness of Nixon, the niceness of Ford, and the mean hypocrisies of Carter's pieties, I look forward to the implacable affability of Ronald Reagan. I like and admire him simply as a man. He is not as sophisticated as some with graduate school training, but on his feet he thinks as quickly as, and with greater common sense, clarity, and humor than, the two pietists with whom he is competing for our votes. He has faced relentless heavy weather from the more sophisticated parts of our population. This, too, endears him to me.

Besides, he borrowed from an early essay of mine the themes "work, family, neighborhood, strength, and liberty," and is making a more intelligent and concerted effort than any Republican in history to represent the working class and suburban ethnic voters who have so often voted Democratic and been so often deserted by its party activists.

I hope Reagan wins. If he does not, I am happy to have publicly expressed my admiration for what he is trying to do. And I apologize if my endorsement dooms him.

THROWING MY VOTE— TO ANDERSON

RICHARD C. WADE

THE CENTRAL ISSUE of the campaign is the four-year stewardship of the presidency by Jimmy Carter. The president would prefer it otherwise. For over a year he has tried to switch the emphasis to his opponents' personalities rather than to his own performance. His commercials dwelt on the "character" of Senator Edward M. Kennedy and now on Governor Ronald Reagan's, not on whatever "accomplishments" his adminstration might claim over the past four years. Moreover, he has successfully avoided having to defend his record directly by wriggling out of promised debates with his opponents both in the primaries and the general election. He has reduced his press conferences to an occasional event, and then treats them as a campaign appearance, not as serious give-and-take with reporters on the crucial questions facing the nation.

The president's reluctance to defend his record is understandable. When asked by the press how he would grade his own performance, he gave himself a "C" on both domestic and foreign policy. Some might say that Carter is an easy grader, but even the president himself considers his performance as mediocre. He could have gracefully retired this year since he had said many times that a president should have only one term, albeit a six-year one. But he chose to run for reelection with the broad strategy of turning the issue to his opponents' perceived weaknesses rather than to his own record.

But, as voters, we have a right to ask certain elementary questions about the conduct of our foreign policy and the management of the economy over the past four years.

In foreign policy:

Are our relations with our European allies better now than they were in 1976?

Are we closer to the control of atomic weapons now than we were in 1976?

Is American influence in Latin America, especially the Caribbean, stronger now than in 1976?

Is the Middle East more stable now than it was in 1976?

Is the Russian influence in Africa less now than it was in 1976?

Is the dollar stronger abroad now than it was in 1976?

Are American products more competitive in international markets now than in 1976?

Is Salt II closer to ratification now than in 1976?

The answers to these questions are obviously no. The power and influence of this country around the world is lower now than it has been for over a half century. The fact needs no new

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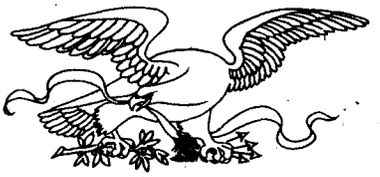

documentation. The president went on national television to tell the Russians that their military presence in Cuba was "unacceptable"; they are still there. He then said that Cuban military troops in Africa threatened the peace; they are still there. He called the capture of American hostages in Iran "intolerable;" those hostages are still there. He described the Russian occupation of Afghanistan as the "greatest threat to peace" since 1945; their troops are still there.

Worse still, the conduct of foreign policy has been so erratic and contradictory that neither friend or foe can predict what American action will be on most important and delicate questions in a dangerous world. After encouraging our European allies to believe that we would support a neutron bomb, he unexpectedly (even if wisely) canceled the project. The American ambassador at the United Nationa voted to condemn Israel on a critical Middle Eastern decision only to have the president explain that the United States had intended just the opposite. After making human rights the cornerstone of American foreign policy, the United States has wound up voting for Pol Pot in the Security Council and shoring up President Zia in Pakistan. After refusing India the uranium necessary to build nuclear bombs he suddenly reversed his stated policy of controlling the proliferation of atomic weapons.

For a quarter of a century, the world had come to depend on a single presidential voice in international affairs. There were many times, especially during the Vietnam war, that I dissented from that voice but at least there was no confusion about American intentions. And surely there was not the case where one policy was advocated by the Secretary of State and another by the National Security Advisor.

The same questions can be asked about our domestic affairs:

Is the economy now stronger and more productive now than it was in 1976?

Is inflation less now than the seven percent that Candidate Carter called "intolerable" in 1976?

Is unemployment now nearer the level of four percent which Candidate Carter proclaimed as an "indispensable goal" in 1976?

Are we nearer the federalization of health and wealth now than we were in 1976?

Are we producing as much publicly assisted housing now as in 1976?

Has one state endorsed E.R.A. since 1976?

The answers to these questions are once again obviously no. The Carter administration's response to double-digit inflation was first to fight it with voluntary guidelines. They were generally ignored by those powerful enough to do so, and the administration simply raised the guidelines to accommodate the violations. The administration then did what Candidate Carter said he would never do: fight inflation by a self-induced recession. He flirted with a balanced budget as an "essential weapon" in the war against high prices, then sheathed the sword after Pat Caddell showed him some polls and Senator Kennedy romped over him in the primaries in the Northeastern states. So after four years the economy limps along stagnantly with high inflation, high interest rates and the largest accumulation of federal budget deficits of any president in history.

The administration's effort to explain away this demonstrated failure is, of necessity, awkward. Carter's literature in New York, for example, trumpets that "revised *housing programs* (sic) are responsible for over 250,000 units in New York City." The fact is that housing starts in New York are lower than at any time in fifty years, that abandonment continues at 30,000 units a year, and the South Bronx remains a monument in rubble to the broken promises of the president on aid to our beleaguered cities. The handout also includes some interesting history which asserts that Carter "supported and signed into law the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act," and that "President Carter supports National Health Insurance." I was a Kennedy member of the Democratic Platform Committee this spring and introduced amendments to the platform that would include both these programs. Under the personal supervision of Stuart Eizenstat, the president's senior advisor in domestic affairs, they were voted down by the Carter group by a margin of two to one.

IF THE FIRST Carter term is a disappointment, is there any reason to believe that a second one would bring any improvement? Probably not. As a matter of fact, this administration would surely have become even more conservative in the past two years if it had not been for the challenge in the primaries from Senator Kennedy and now in the general election by Congressman Anderson. Once the president is released from his need, indeed obsession, with re-election, he will drift farther and farther to the right where he is more comfortable. He has already diluted the Democratic party platform and abandoned the historic tilt of that party to the weak and vulnerable. One must ask with Winston Churchill, "If this is what they will do in the green wood, what will they do in the brown?" There would no doubt be changes in the cabinet, but the Georgians will surely survive and there is no reason to believe that Carter will lose his keen eye for mediocrity.

Even with our foreign policy in shambles and our economy in near ruin, I find it hard to abandon my party on the presidential level. I have voted for every Democratic nominee since 1948. I make no apology for that. Even the weakest was better than the Republican alternative. Indeed, I assumed that I would with great reluctance and some distaste, "come home" to the party in November. But the character of the Carter campaign prevents the return of this prodigal son.

My doubts about Carter started in 1976. I thought that there was an uncontrolled arrogance in anyone who would entitle his autobiography *Why Not the Best*? My suspicions were deepened by his "ethnic purity" remark in Cleveland. I thought that any candidate who knowingly used that phrase should never become president; a candidate who didn't under-

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stand that phrase should wait a while before seeking the highest office. It was a pure and simple racist remark that not even Andrew Young's explanation could launder.

But the final straw was the callous use of the race issue by the president in his speech at an Atlanta black church. It was not the setting that mattered; black churches have always had a political and social dimension. But his allusion to a "dark cloud of hatred" attributed to Reagan was more than unsettling. Then a few days later the president claimed in a national press conference that he did not say what I had clearly heard him say. Two days later an advertisement in one hundred black papers began with the assertion, "Jimmy Carter named 37 Black judges" and under a picture continued, "That's why the Republicans are out to beat him." One would have to do a good deal of research to find a more blatant exploitation of the most explosive question in American life. It has since been "withdrawn" by the Carter/Mondale campaign with the elegant explanation that the attendant publicity had "reduced its effectiveness." Sam Rayburn once described Richard Nixon as being "beyond the breastworks;" the Carter crowd have placed the president in the same position.

Historically when your own party rejects its own past and principles, you look at the other party's candidate. The Republican nomination of Ronald Reagan removes this option.

Reagan is not, as the president suggests, either a racist or a warmonger. But he is surely not a figure for the eighties. Indeed, when Carter asserted that the G.O.P. nominee was trigger-happy, my mind went back to 1964 when President Johnson made the comment against Barry Goldwater and I was reminded of who it was that gave us that war.

My own feeling is that Reagan is less likely to get us into a war than Jimmy Carter. He is by temperament more cautious than the president; the men around him are less aggressive than, say, Zbigniew Brzezinski. The recklessness of the president in the abortive attempt to rescue our hostages last spring is enough to give one great pause. He now calls the episode "an incomplete success" but if the ninety had ever arrived in Teheran chances are that now 100,000 American troops would be trying to rescue the ninety that were sent in to rescue the fifty-two.

In addition, the people around Reagan are smarter by far than those around Carter. I don't like the views of either group, but the Reagan advisors are not rigid ideologues or foolish people. I suppose I should be frightened by them, but I know some personally and they don't disturb me half as much as the insecure and inept "hard ball team" that runs the present administration.

Therefore, I intend to vote for John Anderson. As an historian I am fully aware of the utility of "third party" candidates, and realize the odds his candidacy inherits. Yet I find several considerations compelling.

The Anderson candidacy has the advantage of keeping Carter honest during the campaign. He must stay close to the traditional Democratic voter rather than competing with Reagan for the right. His platform is closer to the traditional liberal values of this country than either party's platform, much less their performance. He is freer than the other candidates to put together a genuinely bipartisan national administration. He will owe nothing to the traditional patronage sources which have dominated even the best previous administrations.

Of all the candidates, he has a better opportunity to get a good working relationship with Congress. The president began by boasting he was an outsider and he has never been able to establish even a minimum cooperation with Congress; Reagan scarcely knows the political roadmaps in Washington. Anderson's long experience in Congress gives him the best opportunity to produce a creative working relationship with his colleagues on the Hill.

This campaign is not so wild a dream. Every poll shows that when asked, voters describe themselves *first* as independent and secondly Democratic and thirdly Republicans. John Anderson represents the majority party of this country—the Independents. And in the age group of eighteen to forty-five that majority is overwhelming.

Still, when I say that I am voting for Anderson, I am charged with "throwing my vote away." I don't believe that, but even if I did, it is better to throw it away than have it bought or seduced by an administration that by any standards—either by its own promises or its own performances—is a national disgrace and an international scandal.

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Screen

REDFORD VS. REDFORD

A STAR IS FORLORN

IN *Ordinary People*, the Judith Guest best-seller with which Robert Redford has made his debut as a director, there is a boy named Conrad (Tim Hutton) who reminds me of someone I knew in college. The boy I knew was also from an affluent Chicago suburb, and our freshman year he too tried to kill himself. Apparently the pressure he felt from his parents to be a model student drove him to it. In the metal file drawer he had brought from home, he filed a suicide note under "S." Almost as soon as this incident occurred, it began to recede in my mind as an historical moment. The year was 1959. In Massachusetts, where the college was, people were already aware that Jack Kennedy was going to run for president. The 1950s were over, and that suicide attempt felt like the last, desperate gesture they were going to make. It wasn't that none of us would ever try to commit suicide again, but the time for filing the notes under "S" had passed.

Conrad in *Ordinary People* doesn't try to take his life for the same reason as the boy I knew; yet this film also gives me the impression of a *temps perdu*. It makes me wonder whether Guest's novel isn't, for Redford, a kind of meditation on a lost opportunity. It's a film in which an ordinary person, who also happens to be a movie star, worries about whether both his ordinariness and his stardom might not be out of date.

From Keaton, and even Chaplin, to Bogart to James Dean, movie stardom was based on a certain inexpressiveness. The ideal hero was someone who could keep his feelings to himself. He was somebody who didn't let anything touch him too closely to begin with. Chaplin was able to shrug off defeat cheerfully and waddle down the road undaunted. That's the ending to all the tramp's films, and at heart it's not so different from the way *The Maltese Falcon* ended, when Bogart turned over Mary Astor to the cops and walked down the stairs alone. Both stars' heroism lay in not letting life's disappointments get to them. Theirs was the ability to say, like Gable at the end of *Gone with the Wind*, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." No matter how romantic a hero was, he still needed that knack of walking away from disaster. He had to be able to go off into the night when things didn't work out, the way Rhett left Scarlett, in order to start over again somewhere else, to go back to living by his wits alone.

The emotional center of gravity here was the cowboy, the pioneer. His was the ethos with which American audiences identified because they too thought of America as a place where people were trying to build something, where they had nothing yet and everything could be lost at any moment. This was a world of constant cataclysm, the kind in which Keaton and Chaplin both found themselves, a world where hurricane, flood, war, and social upheaval occurred every other minute. One needed to be stoical, to have a carry-on mentality, in order to survive. The object lesson of *Gone with the Wind*, released on the knife edge between the Depression and World War II, was that however high you had risen, you still might have to start over again from scratch. The old virtues of stoicism and impassivity were still necessary.

But sometime in the 1950s it began to seem as if the strong, silent type weren't so necessary any more, or even very helpful. He had become the tight-lipped private eye of the late forties, the tough guy, and now he decayed further into a sullen and surly "rebel without a cause." In the 1955 James Dean classic of that title, the problem was not survival, but excessive security. This is why the old moral code, which used to insure survival, now encouraged rebellion. The world here was so stable, so unthreatened by the earth-shattering disasters which Keaton, Chaplin, Bogart, and Gable had to cope with, that the values they needed became self-destructive. This is the world we visit once again in *Ordinary People*.

How topsy-turvy it has become can be seen from some of the role reversals which occur in the new film. The strength and silence which used to be thought of as self-restraint, a virtue among men, are here displayed by a woman, who is thought contemptible because of them. When her eldest son dies in a boating accident, the imperturbability shown by Beth (Mary Tyler Moore) doesn't help her family get through the crisis. It worsens it. It is what drives Conrad, her other son, to his suicide attempt. Only the father, Cal (Donald Sutherland), is able to be a bit unguarded in his feelings. Openness like his used to be the one characteristic that women were permitted, though even in them it was regarded as a weakness.

In this society of ordinary people, the private eye has been replaced by the psychiatrist. Private eyes were in demand in the past because some member of the upper-middle class was forever misplacing a string of diamonds or a wife. Now such people seem to take their possessions for granted. We can hardly imagine their noticing if something should disappear, and even their lives, except in the event of a freak accident like that boating mishap, seem safe from all harm. What's missing now are people's feelings. This turn of events has forced Sam Spade and Phillip Marlowe to vacate their cramped little offices in a seedy, downtown building. *Ordinary People*'s Dr. Burger (Judd Hirsch) has taken over their lease.

We recognize the premises as those formerly occupied by private eyes because a neon sign outside blinks off and on at night, throwing an eery, familiar light into Burger's consultation room. Closed-mouthed as he is, in accordance with the stereotype of both the gumshoe and the shrink, Burger is still the only character good at repartee. His therapy sessions with Conrad are all back-chat, like a scene between Bogart and Bacall. You hire Burger to help you recover a little equilibrium, the way one might have hired Bogart to get back the diamonds (no questions asked), and Burger does just what Bogart always did. He implicates everybody in your family in some much more heinous crime.

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That crime is, of course, not showing your feelings. That is what Beth is guilty of, so hopelessly guilty that at the end of the movie she is banished to Houston. She is no longer welcome at home in Lake Forest with Conrad and Cal because there the old culture of stoicism has been supplanted by the new culture of narcissism. In the old days, when life was full of catastrophes, it went without question that people were full of feelings they had to control. But now catastrophe is so rare, and the middle class so numb from prosperity, that not showing your feelings raises suspicions you haven't got any. In Lake Forest today, the residents are coming to the conclusion that a person like Beth is an empty shell. Her family sloughs her off the way a spring beetle struggles from its husk. Lake Forest is a bad place to be geographically. It's caught in the middle between New England and southern California.

I suspect that for Robert Redford, Beth's inadequacies are a special source of anxiety. They touch a nerve. Redford not only works in southern California, but hails from there originally. Yet he has tried to live most of his adult life, figuratively, in Lake Forest. He has shunned celebrity, lived in rural Utah (which is a movie-star suburb), stayed married to the same woman for twenty years, and shown his feelings in public only where traditionalist liberal causes like conservation and the environment were concerned. When he sees Cal and Beth's home break up in *Ordinary People*, he must feel as if his own is threatened. More important than that, though, he must feel as if his stardom is in jeopardy. He is not John Travolta, after all. Beth and Cal are his audience. There is one inconsequential scene in *Ordinary People* that must give him quite a twinge, for in it Beth and Cal decide on the way to the same old party with the same old friends that they'll go to a movie instead. But then, when they drive up to the party anyway, we see that the very idea of going to a movie was a joke, something each knew the other would never take seriously.

The attraction that *Ordinary People* has for Redford lies in Beth. He identifies with her rather than Cal, who, he revealed in a recent interview, "was not a character that interested me." He never considered playing the role of Cal himself. Of Beth he said, "You can . . . say she's terrible, but I didn't want to do that." He wanted to "see her as somewhat admirable." In a way her dilemma as a person is also his as a movie star. As I said before, the inexpressive heroes in our movies have required inexpressive stars. Redford has always pursued the traditional role. From *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* to *Three Days of the Condor* to *The Sting* and *Brubaker*, he has played the hero who maintains his equanimity every time the bottom falls out of his world. He has played the person who remains ordinary against all odds.

But now the middle-class culture in which he lives and on which his stardom relies is doing a flip-flop. Heroics no longer depend on concealing your emotions, but on acting them out. Stars like Redford have had an inferiority complex about acting anyway. Acting is supposed to be showing your feelings, but stardom has required the opposite, and has therefore made stars doubt whether they were capable of acting at all. Now Beth comes along, with her implication that inexpressiveness is inadequate to life, and she makes Robert Redford wonder whether it might not be inadequate to movies as well.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Stage

BELATEDLY, THE TONIES

STRANGERS ON THE STAGE

RESPECTABLE DRAMA CRITICS are supposed to be *au courant*, but when the time for the Tony Awards comes around each Spring I find that many of the contenders and often the winners are strangers to me. Such is usually the case with the musicals, but this year I blanked out across the board. I had seen neither Mark Medoff's *Children of a Lesser God*, which won three awards—Best Play, Best Actor (John Rubinstein), Best Actress (Phyllis Frelich)—nor *Evita*, which picked up seven Tonies, including Best Musical. Since the two shows are comfortably established on Broadway and the producers of *Children* have sent out a road company, I thought I had better find out what I have been missing.

Children of a Lesser God, an account of the making and the breaking of a marriage between a deaf woman and her teacher, is a difficult play to discuss. If one praises it, as most of the reviewers have, one risks the error of the husband in the play, offering an embrace which becomes a kind of condescension. Is it the play that is being applauded, or the occasion that allows some talented members of the National Theatre of the Deaf to move into the mainstream of American theater? If one faults the play, are the doubts an attempt to avoid making special allowances for both the subject matter and the performers—that is, is it another form of condescension? To complicate matters further, the play is both a play and a translation. In ordinary circumstances presumably two people talking in signs would do so without the constant verbal flow necessary to explain what is going on to an audience who does

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not understand the language. Sarah insists that the silence in which she lives is full of richness that James or any other hearing person cannot conceive; certainly the play, bound in by the need to translate, cannot begin to convey that silence.

The play is a conventional one, familiar enough in the feminist drama of recent years. James, attracted to Sarah, breaches the wall she has built around herself and takes her into a marriage which at first seems idyllic but which contains the seeds of its inevitable collapse. The man who wants to help his wife becomes her oppressor, not allowing her to be herself, to create her own place in the world; what he thinks is love, she believes is ego-fulfillment. The marriage is not only endangered by what the two people bring to it, but by the fact that Sarah, as a member of a minority, is accused by her activist friend and ally of sacrificing the cause to a selfish desire to find comfort and acceptance in the hearing world, an accusation which, as uncletomism, was once a cliché of Black drama. She decides not to let either her husband or her hearing-impaired friend—with whatever affection—impose a preconceived role on her. The play ends with the separation of husband and wife and with the suggestion that a reconciliation may become possible if each of them can admit a need for help from the other.

My problem with the play is that I do not know how to react to it. Insofar as it is about Sarah's discovery of herself, it is a standard didactic play unusual only in that the hearing-impaired are the new misunderstood minority. My own sympathy goes frequently to the exasperated husband. I have been told for years that I cannot possibly understand because I am not female, Black, Jewish, Catholic, homosexual, under thirty. I know, being male and WASP, that no one who is not male and WASP can understand me, but sympathy on stage is directed to the oppressed minority rather than the presumably oppressing minority. *Children of a Lesser God* seems to want to elicit that kind of sympathy and, because Sarah is so attractive a character, it can certainly do so. I want the play to be more complicated than that. Since no marriage—however close, however loving—can make two people one, can bring full understanding, can avoid the intrusion of ego, the special cases of James, as teacher, and Sarah, as unwilling pupil, can become metaphors for any marriage. In attempting to see the play in those terms, however, I may simply be showing my oppressor's sympathy for the husband and making Sarah's case for her.

Evita also offers problems in perception. In that most unlikely how-to book, *How to Have a Life-style*, Quentin Crisp describes Eva Peron as the "greatest political stylist the world has ever known," and describes an occasion in which Mrs. Peron, lifting her arms to speak and sending the diamond bracelets sliding, had to wait for the "expensive clatter" to stop before she could begin, "We, the shirtless. . . ." One's reaction to that scene depends on whether Mrs. Peron's aplomb be taken as an example of style or evidence of social and political irresponsibility. *Evita* offers that same leeway for response. Harold Prince has several times pointed out that Evita is not intended as an exemplary heroine, that the musical is a satiric account of her rise to political eminence and a sardonic comment on a public that embraced her image. The presence of Che Guevara, as a cross between a master-of-ceremonies and a political lecturer, is supposed to insure such a reading. Yet, the musical form in this case belies the intention. Unlike that other Prince show, *Sweeney Todd*, *Evita* has the shape of a success story; the heroine appears to have the "star quality" one of her songs promises, to embody a kind of vitality which—on stage at least—is obviously a positive quality. There are a number of good satiric moments—for instance, the game of musical chairs that brings Peron to power—but the total effect of the show is to gain audience sympathy for the little girl who screwed her way to power and then died young.

Although *Children of a Lesser God* and *Evita* posed ideational questions that bothered me, my reaction to the productions in both cases was unequivocal. The performances of John Rubinstein and A. Linda Bove; who was substituting for Phyllis Frelich when I saw *Children*, were excellent, expressing an emotional range that allowed me to move beyond the didactic to the more complex human drama that I wanted to find in Mark Medoff's play. At *Evita*, on the contrary, I was completely undone by the technical inefficiency of the production. As always with a Prince show, there were richly conceived scenes and a remarkable sense of vibrancy, but the sound system was so bad that I could seldom understand Patti LuPone as Evita, and Mandy Patinkin, as Che, became incomprehensible when he lifted his voice or speeded up his delivery which he almost always did when he reached the satiric point of a passage. Tim Rice's lyrics may have undercut Andrew Lloyd Webber's music, making *Evita* the political musical Prince says it is, but if you cannot hear the words, how can you know?

GERALD WEALES

Media

RE-CREATING MAIN ST.

A LOOK AT 'DUTCH' REAGAN

IN KANSAS in the 1930s I would sometimes listen to what was called a "re-creation" of baseball games played on the road by our local team, an ineffectual Pittsburgh farm club whose only distinction was its name, the Hutchinson Larks. When the Larks would go forth to do their best against the Muskogee (Oklahoma) Reds, or the Springfield (Missouri) Cardinals or the Fort Smith (Arkansas) Giants, the radio announcer who gave a play-by-play account of their triumphs and disasters would take himself not to Oklahoma or Missouri or Arkansas, where the game was actually being played, but to the Hutchinson radio station. There he would find a Western Union ticker sputtering a laconic report of the game's events. Sitting alone in a bare studio, with nothing but this ticker, a

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microphone, and his imagination this announcer — a friend of my family named "Bud" Detter — would manufacture a verbal picture of a game being played perhaps a hundred and fifty miles away. The ticker might spell out something like CURVE/FLY/DEEP CENTER/OUT. Bud would amplify: "And he steps back on the rubber. (Pause) He checks the runner at first. (Pause — it was important not to run ahead of one's information). Here's the stretch. (Pause) And the pitch. Curve ball, swung on, hit hard out into center field . . . (mounting excitement) It's going deep . . . deep . . . Musial is racing back . . . back . . . he's under it . . . AND he makes the catch for the out, and the side is retired. Nice play." (Stan Musial played briefly for the Springfield Cardinals on his way to immortality.) BALL HIGH OUTSIDE would be the distillate for a long tantalizing paragraph; HOME RUN RIGHT would bring forth paroxysms of extempore drama.

At about the time Bud Detter was performing this service for the baseball fans of central Kansas a young man called "Dutch" Reagan was excelling in the same curious art form for the benefit of a much larger audience on the plains to the north, over station WHO in Des Moines. Mr. Reagan, whose present activity is the occasion for this recollection, "re-created" games of the Chicago Cubs. He has entertained audiences for forty years, according to *Newsweek,* with the story of the time the ticker failed while Augie Galen of the Cubs was at bat, and Reagan had to keep Galen fouling off imaginary pitches for six minutes until the ticker started up again.

Young Reagan had prepared for this singular vocation, in his days at Eureka College in Illinois, by listening to dozens of football and baseball games on the radio. His ambition then, according to his brother, was to be just such a radio announcer. "When he was in the Teke House," a Eureka authority tells us, "he used to sit in his room announcing up to twenty football games out of his head." He got his first job, as a sports announcer on station WOC in Davenport, Iowa, by an audition in which he re-created a particularly thrilling Eureka football game into a dead microphone.

He went on from WOC to WHO, to Warner Brothers, to the Screen Actors Guild, to the General Electric Theatre, to Death Valley Days, to conservative spokesmanship, to the Governor's mansion in Sacramento, re-creating all the way.

Since my own days as a follower of the Hutchinson Larks I have become a college professor, so I feel the duty now and again to make use of the word "paradigm." I sense an opportunity here. Young Dutch Reagan's persuasive re-creation of a distant unseen ball game for an extensive unseen audience is a paradigm of his career, and also of the role of the "media," in public life.

The center of the action is not the ball field but the studio, with its microphone or camera. The central figure is the affable "personality" or "star" — the "Bud" or "Dutch" or "Red," with the voice or the face that Comes Across. The material is the set of formulas familiar to the audience waiting out there at the Philco, the Empress, or the Zenith color set. The events of the world and dreams of the audience come in little signals on the alert promoter's ticker, and are sorted, spiced, heightened, re-arranged: made over into something that will "hold the attention without engaging the mind." What the home folks want is a program on the RCA Victor that makes them forget the home folks. What Main Street wants is an Empress Theater on Main Street in which it can get away from Main Street. And the secret truth about ball games may be that the broadcasting is a good deal more engaging than the lonely boredom of the outfield, or the yawning effort in the stands to follow, uninstructed, with one's own eye, that little ball.

Ronald Reagan is the purest product of the re-creation of reality accomplished by these new media yet to appear in the upper reaches of American politics. In his current role he has announced as his theme — as befits a media man — a string of old, warm, winning, widely accepted words: "family, work, neighborhood, freedom, peace." But his own life is described by a series of new words: radio, movies, television.

Samuel Johnson observed that we are all molded by our vocation, by what we do day after day; what Reagan has done is to appear before microphones, cameras, and audiences. His service on the assembly line of America's dream factories has been life-long.

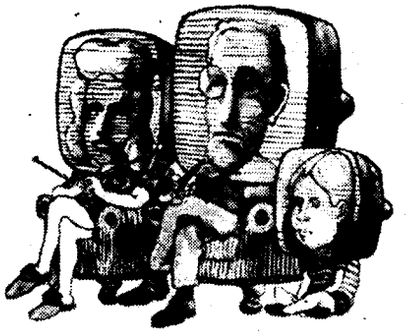
Work? Already at 22, sportscasting for WHO, he was making more money than his father — a shoe salesman in Illinois towns and the real Main Street article — had ever made. At a later stage in his well scripted life he could come down from Malibu Hills and earn from General Electric Theatre his $175,000 a year with an appearance one day each week before the camera. Still later, as he was moving to a new role in Sacramento, he sold his Malibu ranch to Twentieth Century Fox for the very generous price of nearly $2 million, thirty times what he had paid for it.

Peace? Reagan, with his valuable baritone and winning personality, spent the years of World War II at the Hal Roach studio in Culver City narrating training films for the Air Force.

Neighborhood? If Pacific Palisades has a corner grocery store no stranger can find it.

Reagan describes himself now, after a mid-life political transformation, as a Main Street Republican; his own Main Street, however, has been the one created on the Warner Brothers lot under the endless sunshine of Southern California . . . a Main Street more persuasive to many Americans than the one they live on.

This multimillionaire media performer leaves his actress



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wife and show biz family at Rancho del Cielo above Santa Barbara, travels the Ventura Freeway to a Hollywood studio, and tapes an appeal to the old Main Street values far more persuasive than those of his rivals, born-again squares from Plains, Georgia, and Rockford, Illinois.

He is by no means simply an "actor"; he was a *movie star*, in the era of movie stars, when Warner Brothers and MGM and Paramount ground out feature films for all the world — Sun., Mon., Tue., Wed.: ROMANCE; Thurs., Fri., Sat.: ACTION; next week MYSTERY and TERROR. He came back to radio as a conservative political spokesman. And in the '50s, as the new and still more powerful medium sprouted its aerials across the suburban developments and sprinkled its spooky blue rectangles into every living room, General Electric and Borax gave him a role as a television host, actor, speaker, and persuader.

When he got his chance in the big league politics of the television age he was ready. At the 1964 Republican Convention in Los Angeles he hit one into the upper deck of the center field stands. His speech about the United States being the last "Island of Freedom" in the world moved conservative legions of the television audience to ecstasy, brought in millions for Goldwater, and established Reagan as a political star. There were delegates at this year's GOP convention who were still floating on the waves made by Reagan's speech sixteen years ago. David Broder and Stephen Hess wrote that that speech "was the most striking political debut since William Jennings Bryan electrified the 1896 Democratic convention with his famous 'cross of gold' speech." But Williams Jennings Bryan had the distinct inconvenience of reaching only those who could hear his powerful but unaided voice; Reagan had spent his lifetime with microphones and cameras. And he had spent years giving that very speech.

As a practiced actor he can bring tears to his eyes on cue, as he regularly does when telling about his father being fired on Christmas Eve in 1931 or about America as a shining city on a hill. He did it again at the end of his acceptance speech this year when he couldn't keep himself from asking for that moment of silent prayer.

In the days when he was doing the General Electric Theatre, Reagan once did an institutional advertisement about General Electric's role in making the nuclear submarine, using the same winning and persuasive manner he employed in selling GE appliances. Lou Cannon of the *Washington Post* says that this story went around Hollywood: A man said, "I really didn't need a nuclear submarine, but I have one now."

In the twilight of his career Reagan is playing a fairly good role — a conservative Republican candidate for president in a drab year — but one senses that he would have exchanged it for one of the leads in *Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, or Humphrey Bogart's role in *Casablanca*, or George C. Scott's in *Patton*.

* * *

A last word about the Larks. Fairly often, alas, they would have fallen behind something like 13-0 by the third inning, and Bud Detter's work, slogging on to the last out, would be very hard. It had been noticed that the simulation or re-creation of games by men of talent like Bud and Dutch could be more engrossing than mere reports done by lesser announcers physically present at the game. That gave an idea, of course, to many a satirist, and perhaps to many a sponsor, too. Why have a game? Simulate all the way. Make it up. Dramatize, heighten, simplify, fill it with personality. Keep the action interesting. Hold the audience: The broadcast's the thing. For a genuine media talent reality can be a nuisance.

WILLIAM LEE MILLER

Books: IN THE LIGHT OF NEW EVENTS

DISCERNING THE WAY

A THEOLOGY OF THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN REALITY

Paul Van Buren

Seabury, $12.95, 207 pp.

Gregory Baum

THIS is an important, carefully reasoned book that deserves close attention. A short review will not be able to do it justice. The author, profoundly impressed by the negation of Jewish existence in the Christian theological tradition, has made a major theological effort to re-think and re-interpret Christian teaching so that it respects the Jewish people as God's chosen race, retains a sense that salvation comes from the Jews and honors Jewish religion in the common era until our own day. The principal inspiration for Van Buren's theological move is drawn from German Jewish thinker Franz Rosenzweig who, half a century ago, saw in the Christian religion the extension of the wisdom and worship of Israel to the Gentiles. Rosenzweig argued that Jesus had spoken the truth when he announced, "No one comes to the Father except through the Son." The Jewish people, having received the covenant, were already with the Father; but the Gentiles, those far away, had no other access to the God of Israel and the divine promises, except through Jesus Christ. This is the key to Van Buren's theology. The details of this position are worked out with great originality and inner coherence.

The God of the church, Van Buren argues, is the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit. The Christian doctrine of God records the experience of the church that was quickly becoming a Gentile enterprise. Christians experienced God as present to them in the Spirit. At the same time, they realized that this presence did

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not come from anything they had inherited, it came to them from beyond their own tradition; it came to them from the people of Israel. The Spirit was in fact the God of Israel. But how had this extraordinary transfer taken place? In the Jew Jesus, the God of Israel had revealed himself to the Gentiles. In Jesus, God had become available to the nations beyond Israel. (Van Buren shows how the perception of Jesus and his work changed as the church became more and more Gentile.) Trinity, he concludes, is true for the church, Jesus is the one mediator for the church: but this triune God is in fact the God of Israel, the God who is worshipped in Jewish religion.

The church defines itself through its relation to Israel. This is an abiding perspective of the book. The author examines the Christian teaching on sin, redemption, forgiveness, and salvation to bring out the new meaning, one that respects God's antecedent presence in Israel. The author develops an understanding of revelation, tradition, and doctrine that enables him to continue the existing conversation in the church and despite the innovation, present his new approach in a manner acceptable in systematic theology. As a closely reasoned theological work the book is a delight to read. Central to Van Buren's view is that doctrine and theology are part of the conversation which Christians carry on as they follow the Way of the Lord. "Walking" the way precedes "dialogue." Experience and action have a predominance over thinking.

Revelation, in this perspective, is the re-interpretation of the inherited Scriptures in the light of a new event. Thus the Hebrews re-read their Scriptures after the exile, they re-read them after the return to Jerusalem, they re-read them again after the destruction of the temple. Christians re-read the inherited Scriptures after the life of Jesus Christ. There is no reason, Van Buren argues, why this process should come to a stop. Events that take place in the Jewish people may still provoke a re-reading of the Scriptures in Judaism as well as in the church. Such events, the author shows, have been the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel. These events have provoked new reflection in the church and a re-reading of Scripture. Van Buren demonstrates from ecclesiastical documents, mainly Catholic but also Protestant, that such a re-reading has in fact taken place. These ecclesiastical documents, including Vatican II, tell us that, against all previous teaching, Christians recognize the abiding chosenness of the Jewish people, and are called, not to convert Jews to Christianity, but to honor them, to respect their religion as based on the ancient covenant, and to engage in conversation and cooperation with them. This, Van Buren correctly observes, is new teaching. It is at odds with what the churches have taught over the last 2000 years. On what basis can the church modify its teaching so radically? On divine revelation: an event in Jewish history has led to a re-reading of Scripture. God has addressed the church through the current experience of the people of Israel.

Van Buren has written a closely reasoned book that invites discussion. The author does not expect the reader to agree with all his positions. It is part of the ongoing Christian conversation. Thus I have a good deal of difficulty with the God language chosen by the author. Catholic theologians are so used to the concept of God as incomprehensible mystery that they tend to follow "the way of negation," i.e. the way of negating everything that is said of God and then only re-affirm it in a specified and limited manner. Catholics on the whole tend to protect, or even emphasize, the agnostic strain in the doctrine of God. This agnostic side, this *via negationis*, is overlooked by Van Buren. He betrays a neo-orthodox confidence in the traditional biblical words.

A much greater shortcoming in my opinion is Van Buren's view that God addresses the church only through events taking place among the Jewish people. I would argue that God also addresses the church through other events. The native peoples of Canada are making land claims at this time. Is God, through their plight, addressing the white church which has been part of the culture that decimated and oppressed the native

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peoples? I believe so. Van Buren gives no good reason why only the events among the Jewish people mediate God's word to the church and provoke a re-reading of Scripture. The recognition that the church is also addressed through events beyond Israel is in no way offensive to the Jewish community. And because Van Buren does not hear God's voice speaking to the American church from the experience of oppressed groups, he lacks the theological concepts for dealing with what is close to his heart, namely the reconciliation of the human family in justice and peace.

Van Buren rejects the spiritualization of the Gospel. He opposes theological dualism. He acknowledges that God's presence moves history toward the pacification of humankind. But, in my opinion, he lacks the critical conceptual tools to make his theology of reconciliation credible. This lacuna is symbolized by the undisturbed and unreflective use of an exclusively male language throughout the entire work, despite the effort of Jewish and Christian feminists to make us more sensitive.

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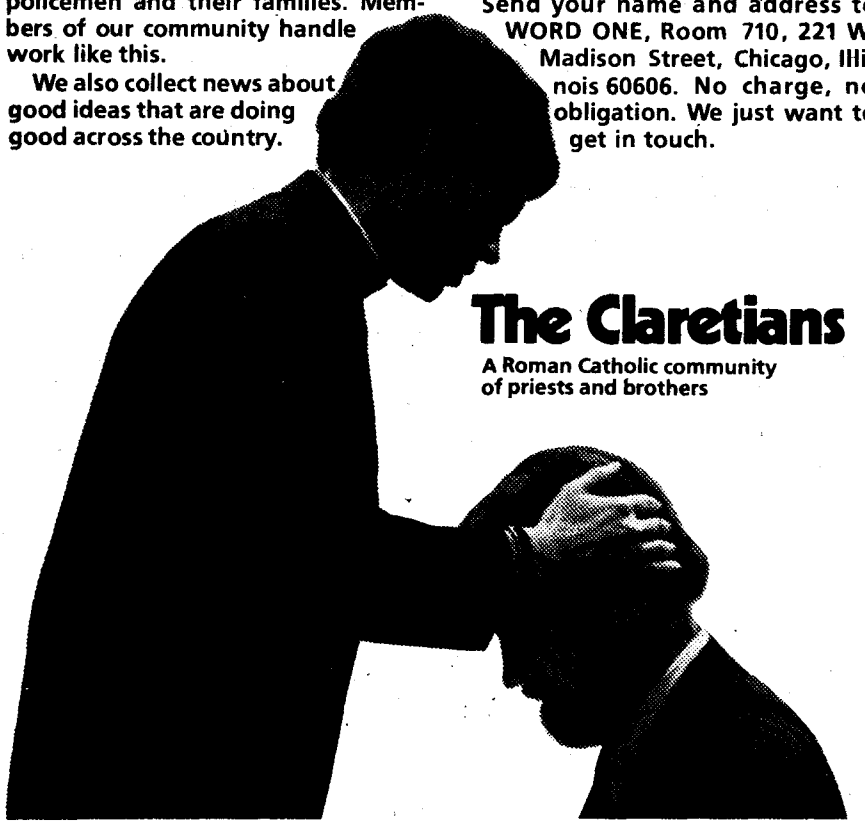

The Claretians

A Roman Catholic community of priests and brothers

In my own writings I have argued that the Voice addressing the church through the awful event of Auschwitz summons Christians to free their teaching from all anti-Jewish distortions as well as from all other ideologies that legitimate injustice. After Auschwitz we know how dangerous ideologies are, how deadly, how murderous. The church, I have argued, has entered a new stage of self-understanding. It is dedicated to liberating itself and the Christian message from all ideological deformations. The Holocaust demands of the church that it recognize its anti-Jewish stance as well as the legitimating power of Christianity in protecting colonial oppression, subjugation of native peoples, slavery and the inferiorization of black people, the domination of women, the modern capitalist system, etc. Van Buren does not recognize this. Because he is not in dialogue with the social sciences, he does not ask the question why the early church developed its anti-Jewish stance and how this stance has infiltrated almost every aspect of its life. He does not discover what "ideology" is. He does not deal with the systemic distortions of symbols and institutions as they are studied by social scientists.

It is not the intention of Van Buren to defend injustice. For him religion, Jewish and Christian, aims at the transformation and humanization of all people on this globe. His concerns are this-worldly. What he lacks is a sustained dialogue with modernity. He does not recognize that the encounter with modernity is crucial for all religions, including Judaism and Christianity. In his negation of modernity, he puts modern culture, modern thought and social science all in one bag, without ever recognizing that modernity has produced its own critical reaction. The most profound critiques of positivism, instrumental rationalism, the dehumanizing impact of technology and bureaucracy, and the progressivism characteristic of liberal thought have been made not by theological authors in the first place, but by secular authors. Every great human tradition, including the Enlightenment, brings forth its own critique. It is in fact from these critics that theologians have learnt a great deal. Van

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Buren naively puts all theologians affirming secularity into the same category without asking himself whether they serve the dominant trend of culture and flatter our society, or whether they endorse the great critiques of Enlightenment and unsettle the existing order. In particular, Van Buren is unjust in his evaluation of David Tracy. Van Buren makes Tracy out to be a secularist (identified with the bourgeois secular spirit that inspired Van Buren in his early work), while in fact Tracy argues that in Jesus Christ the conflict between religious and secular consciousness is reconciled. God is the transcendent mystery of human being's humanization. There is a special affinity, I believe, between Christian theology and the secular critiques of the present order. To sidestep this conversation, as Van Buren has done in *Discerning the Way*, leads to serious consequences.

Van Buren's non-dialectical negation of modernity makes it impossible for him to deal with the tensions in Judaism between orthodoxy, reform, and conservatism. For an honest appreciation of Judaism this is important. For the same reason, Van Buren does not mention in a single sentence the presence of Palestinians in Israel as second-class citizens. For the first time, after the long centuries in the diaspora, Jewish religion has to deal with ethical problems of this kind. Because Van Buren has not discovered the notion of ideology, he criticizes Latin American liberation theologians for endorsing socialism without ever mentioning how deeply the churches, Christian ethos, and popular piety in North America are identified with capitalism and its tragic individualism. Van Buren's critical paragraph on Latin American liberation theology has a curious quality when read at this very time, before the November election in the U.S., when the important secular leaders seem to count on Christianity as support for the existing capitalist order and when the noise made by many Christian organizations confirms their expectations. Van Buren passes over in silence this massive phenomenon. Again, the author is committed to justice and the radical transformation of society but because of his non-dialectical negation of modernity and his inability to detect in social sciences and modern thought the genesis of an indispensable critique of modernity, he simply lacks the conceptual tools for presenting the Christian Gospel, as he wants it to be, a divine message of emancipation.

The right men at the right time

THUNDER ON THE RIGHT
THE "NEW RIGHT" AND THE POLITICS OF RESENTMENT

Alan Crawford
Pantheon, $13.95, 381 pp.

Joe Holland

THE "NEW RIGHT" is a disturbing development in American politics. The same historical conditions which gave rise to a New Left in the sixties inevitably gave rise to a New Right in the seventies. Indeed the New Right gained strength precisely because it copied the tactics of the New Left. Both may be described as new forms of political technology, since both are based on skillful use of mass media and computerized mailing lists. Both are also symptoms of the end of a political era, where underdeveloped communications and transportation technology required that the democratic process be organized through the mediating institution of the classical political party. But paradoxically while the revolution in communications and transportation has uprooted the political party from its original source in community, it has simultaneously laid the foundation for alternative populist initiatives. Both the New Left and the New Right are presently competing for leadership within this populist groundswell. So far the New Right has been more successful.

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His book is also a low-keyed attack on the New Right, but from a conservative, rather than a liberal or socialist perspective.

The book's thirteen chapters can be grouped into three clusters, although the author does not explicitly so group them. The first cluster (chapters 1-4) describes the structure of the New Right—its organizational, financial, and cultural structure. The second cluster (chapters 5-8) probes four key themes in New Right propaganda—defense of family, anti-elitism, the centrality of media, and anti-bigness. The third and final cluster (chapters 9-13) addresses the political significance of the New Right—its implications for the Republican and Democratic parties, its use of the politics of grievance or resentment, its roots in American populism rather than authentic conservativism, and its fundamental threat to democracy.

Crawford does a masterful job of chronicling the genesis and structure of the New Right. If anything, the material is so thorough that it becomes a bit tedious to read. But it is invaluable. He brings key New Right leaders like Richard Viguerie, Paul Weyrich, and Howard Philips, and key New Right organizations like the Heritage Foundation, Moral Majority, Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, and countless others into public scrutiny. He discloses the New Right strategy to build on fear and insecurity, especially among lower-middle-class Americans from the South, the West, and the Midwest, against trigger-issues like busing, abortion, gun control, homosexuals, women's liberation, the Panama Canal, and so on.

But in Crawford's judgment, the New Right only preys on the constituencies behind these issues, and is not ultimately concerned with the issues themselves. He sees the leaders using the issues instrumentally to build a power base. He sees them feeding on confusion and resentment, but building nothing in their place except mindless power. For Crawford, the movement represents in the final analysis the drive of blind political technology, which could turn against its own constituency.

This is the real reason for Crawford's writing the book, although he carefully subordinates criticism to chronicle at most points. Only toward the end, as he reviews the political significance, does he make his criticism strongly. As a classic conservative who treasures mediating institutions to guarantee the checks and balances required by a stable social order, he is disturbed by the New Right call for direct democracy through popular initiatives which by-pass normal institutions. He fears, and rightfully so in my opinion, that the mobilization of the reckless resentments of mass society will lead not to populist empowerment, but to a strengthening of the "imperial presidency." He does not state it so crassly, but he indicates the call for direct democracy will lead instead to dictatorship.

I enjoyed Crawford's book and learned a great deal from it. I further believe he is correct in warning of the totalitarian danger from the New Right—a danger which is still weak, but growing. But I find his solution not adequate to the danger. A return to old forms of checks and balances may prove insufficient to the challenge before us.

Many years ago, in her book on *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt discussed the crisis of the modern party system, both in its class-based continental form and in its interest group Anglo-American model. She called not for a return to old forms, but for the development of a new political principle, one which would be an antidote to totalitarianism and which would provide the seed for a new society. She referred to this principle eventually as the "council system," and saw its roots in the workers' councils which rose and were repressed at various points in capitalist and communist political history.

I find it interesting that this is precisely the model taken for pastoral strategy by the Catholic church in many parts of the Third World, where it lives under right-wing persecution. In Catholic pastoral strategy, this principle is referred to as the "basic Christian community." Rebuilding community, then, as well as new forms of community institutions, may be a better long range strategy for resisting the American and indeed the global New Right.

More reflection on this priniciple, on the wider global experience, and on the structural cause of the rise of the New Right, would be a helpful supplement to Alan Crawford's important, but limited study. Nonetheless, I am grateful he wrote it.

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TENEBRAE

Geoffrey Hill

Houghton Mifflin, $4.50, 48 pp.

Gary Zebrun

GEOFFREY HILL is one of England's strongest poets, extending the intellectual/visionary tradition of Milton, Donne, and Blake. In his fourth, characteristically slim, collection, *Tenebrae*, Hill continues to present powerfully compressed poems, in which he considers the difficult but necessary task of seeking a moral ideal in the bankrupt culture of present-day Christianity. In his early poem "Annunciations" he describes this *beautiful necessity*, which continues to trouble and attract him in his new work:

So it is required; so we bear witness,
Despite ourselves, to what is beyond us,
Each distant sphere of harmony forever
Poised, unanswerable.

The poet describes the dark night of his religious desire in an epigraph to the opening poem of *Tenebrae*, "The Pentecost Castle." he quotes Yeats, the grimmer Yeats who knew that "it is terrible to desire and not/possess, and terrible to possess/and not desire." Gnarled in both belief and unbelief, Hill expresses a range of complex emotions. For instance, referring to his slain self in the third section of "The Pentecost Castle," the speaker, bewildered and angry, addresses Christlike observers—perhaps

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those once fiery, though now pale, signs (like Christianity itself) of Pentecost:

You watchers on the wall
grown old with care
I too looked from the wall
I shall look no more

tell us what you saw
the lord I sought to serve
caught in the thorn grove
his blood on his brow

you keepers of the wall
what friends or enemy
sets free the cry
of the bell

At other times in the poem the speaker is more clearly skeptical about the power of Christianity to give one comfort when "ghosts for love/void a few tears/of wax upon/forlorn altars." The speaker feels painfully disconnected from God. He complains that when he "cried out you/made no reply," leaving him next time to "pass by/without a sound." This sense of abandonment recalls Blake in the "Songs of Experience." Like those songs, Hill's poem is a lament for loss of love once known so powerfully in childhood and innocence:

I went out early
to the fare field
ermine and lily
and yet a child

Love stood before me
in that place
prayers could not lure me
to Christ's house

Christ the deceiver
took all I had
his darkness ever
my fair reward

Having expressed his rancor by calling Christ the deceiver, the speaker feels grieved and drained of any will to live, asking himself "If the night is dark/and the way is short/why do you hold back/dearest heart." But the heart does hold back in the dark night, and the darkness, the suffering itself, becomes a kind of brilliant transcendence:

Splendidly-shining darkness
proud citadel of meekness
likening us our unlikeness
majesty of our distress
emptiness ever thronging
untenable belonging
how long until this longing
end in unending song

and soul for soul discover
no strangeness to dissever
and lover keep with lover
a moment and for ever

The poem ends in this splendidly shining darkness, in pure desire, a purity reinforced by the strict repetitions of sound, as the speaker will go down—perhaps as Dante did before he entered the Purgatorio, perhaps as only modern man can do down—"and wash this wound/that will not heal."

Hill is struggling with the aging Christian tradition, unwilling to let it go, or to accept uncritically its cheapened contemporary forms of worship. In the first section of "Lacrimae," the speaker addresses the crucified Christ, and admits to his own hypocrisy:

You are the castaway of drowned remorse,
You are the world's atonement on the hill.
This is your body twisted by our skill
into a patience proper for redress.

Dark passions—images of death—attract the desiring, though skeptical, speaker: "Ash-Wednesday feasts, ascetic opulence,/the wincing lute, so real in its pretence,/itself a passion amorous of love." But death as a kind of relief is less important that death as an imagined state of pure desire. A yearning for belief in God—an openness to any avenue of belief—is at the heart of "Lacrimae":

So many nights the angel of my house
has fed such urgent comfort through a dream,
whispered 'your lord is coming, he is close'

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that I have drowsed half-faithful
for a time
bathed in pure tones of promise and
remorse:
'tomorrow I shall wake to welcome
him.

Hill addresses his poem, "Christmas Trees," to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who, before his martyrdom, cried out against the "easy" faith of so many Europeans and Americans. Bonhoeffer, pacing in his skylit cell "restores the broken themes of praise,/encourages our borrowed days,/by logic of his sacrifice." In the terrible muddlement of our time in which the social and political orders commit so much wild and unthinkable cruelty, the martyr's "words are quiet but not too quiet./We hear too late or not too late."

Although these poems do contain spots of hope and belief, their organizing principle is the difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of transcendence in a world as violent and morally ramshackle as our own. And *Tenebrae* is recurrently elegaic, mourning the loss not only of human kindness and love, but of the power of light itself. In the poem, "Two Chorale-Preludes" on melodies by Paul Celan, Hill says, "There is a land called Lost/at peace inside our heads." And later, evoking the Queen of Heaven, he tells her in his controlled but impassioned voice, "Our solitudes drift/by your solitudes, the seven/dead stars in your sky." These lines represent no mere plunge into the self-pitying solipsism of so much poetry of despair throughout the 60s and 70s. Hill's poetry, instead, reminds one of the dark night of the soul that St. John of the Cross experienced.

Hill knows that man himself is partially, if not solely, responsible for the darkness and lament that surrounds him. In the satiric poem, "A Short History of British India (III)," he points out that thanks to the England of his ancestors, "India's a peacock-shrine next to a shop/selling mangola, sitars, lucky charms,/heavenly Buddhas smiling in their sleep." And in "The Laurel Axe," referring to his own England, he says, "It stands, as though at ease with its own world,/the mannerly extortions, languid praise,/all that devotion long since bought and sold."

Having observed and shared in the hypocrisies of his fellow Christians, Hill has come to believe that "Theology makes good bedside reading." And with this revelation, he is thrown into his crisis of faith, a time during which,

This is the ash-pit of the lily-fire,
this is the questioning at the long
tables,
this is true marriage of the self-in-
self,
this is a raging solitude of desire,
this is the chorus of obscene con-
sent,
this is a single voice of purest
praise. ("Tenebrae," 6)

Hill is not neatly satisfied by his skepticism. his unbelief is a source of suffering, an adversity that has brought forth remarkable religious poems by a man whose intensity and technical difficulty remind one of the great English writer of sublime poems, William Blake.

Progress as freedom, progress as power

HISTORY OF THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

Robert Nisbet

Basic Books, $16.95, 370 pp.

Rosemary Radford Ruether

NISBET'S book aims at a major revision of the standard views of the sources of the idea of progress in Western culture. The usual line is that neither classical culture nor Christian theology supported the idea of progress. Classical thought was tied to a cyclical pattern and located the Golden Age in the past. Christianity thought the world was almost at an end and looked forward to salvation beyond history rather than within history. Only when these twin heritages of Western culture lost their hold in the 17th century through secular science and philosophy was the way cleared for the idea of progress. Then both the progress in scientific thought over the ancients and the evident transformation of life made possible by the application of science to work through technology (something that never happened in classical antiquity) allowed the idea of progress to take hold and become dominant up through the first World War. Only then did the shock of the World Wars and the decline of Western power lead to new movements of historical pessimism.

Nisbet says this isn't so. It is precisely the fusion of classical and Christian thought that is the basis of the idea of progress. In classical literature one finds many versions of the idea of gradual evolution of the arts of civilization from primitive barbarism. In Christianity the vision of the future millennium on earth, derived from Jewish thought, is a continual source of a hope for the future, based not on observation of facts, but on faith in the redeeming power of God. For Nisbet, the normative idea of progress is a fusion of these two. The world, through the arts, sciences and technology, evolves in a continual step-by-step manner toward increasing prosperity and civilization. Christianity provides a vision of ongoing future perfection. Nisbet sees this view lying under the surface in all kinds of unsuspected places in patristic and medieval thought.

Nisbet fails, however, to distinguish between a classical view of progress in civilization that comes up to one's own time, but does not presuppose a strong vision of a better future, and a Judaeo-Christian apocalypticism which is patterned on a dialectic of judgment upon past and present historical evil that releases some new redeemed future through divine intervention and transformation. The first view sanctions the contemporary status quo, and has little stake in significant future change, while the second view projects a vision of the future through subversion of the status quo. In pre-modern and in modern thought one finds one of these patterns or the other, but seldom the combination of the two that Nisbet proclaims.

Nisbet is on shaky ground in claiming Augustine for his theory of progress. It is true that Augustine follows a Jewish apocalyptic pattern of seven millennia of

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world history which he sees as driven to successively higher stages through the conflict of the two principles of pride and sacrificial love. But, for Augustine, this history culminates in the coming of Christ, and the final millennium of history is the thousand-year reign of the church. No future millennium is to be expected beyond this; instead the reign of the church prepares us for a heaven beyond history. Augustine is the source of anti-millennial thought in the Christian tradition, shaped by his continual opposition to the chiliast Donatist movement.

For medieval "progressives" Nisbet finds his strongest case in the marginal movement of Joachimism. The fact that he can find nothing to support his case in mainstream scholastics such as Aquinas should alert us to the problems of his interpretation. Moreover, he fails to distinguish between the more orthodox teachings of Joachim of Fiore himself, who did not challenge the Augustinian view that the Christian era is the final era of humanity, and heretical Joachimism which looks for a third age of the Spirit in history *beyond the Christian dispensation*. Heretical Joachites follow the apocalyptic pattern of rejection of contemporary society as fallen and evil. It is from them that the Reformation inherits the idea that medieval Christendom and the ecclesiastical hierarchy were the Anti-Christ, hardly an idea that fits with Nisbet's concept of progress.

Nisbet's work is handicapped by the fact that he provides no footnotes or page citations for his numerous quotations and references. Thus, although he cites an enormous mass of references, one gets the impression that he is actually dependent on limited reading of them and on secondary sources. Thus his references to Joachimism seem to derive from the work of Marjorie Reeves, whose clear distinction between Joachim himself and heretical Joachites he has failed to understand. But since he provides no references, it is impossible to check his sources.

Nisbet finds little progressive thought in the Renaissance and regards Puritan millennialism as the launching pad for future hope in modern society. He cites Puritan apocalypticists, such as the Fifth

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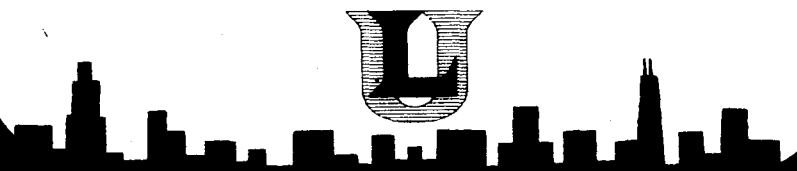

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Monarchy Men, again failing to note their negativity toward current Christian history. For them the Fifth Monarchy of Christ arrives in history through a divine annihilation of the evil "Fourth Monarchy" (an idea derived from the book of Daniel). Nisbet sees modern progressives such as Condorcet, Comte, Hegel and Marx as secular millennialists.

In modern thought Nisbet sees two main trends. The first he calls progress as (individualist) freedom, and the second progress as (state) power. He clearly favors the first, and finds that the second view declines into totalitarianism. But he seems to have little explanation for how racist and repressive regimes could have arisen within the individualist doctrine of progress or how to avoid such developments in a future revival of the doctrine. The main burden of his message is that the idea of progress is the creative core of Western faith and we must find some way to revive this faith against its modern detractors. At the time when the West has lost its faith in itself, Nisbet sees hope for the future being preempted by third world socialism.

Unfortunately, Nisbet regards the ecological movement which criticizes affluent individualistic progressivism as the great threat to Western faith in itself. Indeed, one suspects that the rejection of this criticism is the prime inspiration of this work. It never occurs to Nisbet that ecologists might be criticizing an unjust monopolization and misuse of resources by the West precisely in order to clear the way for a renewal of hope on the new basis of distributive justice and sustainable harmony with the environment. Nisbet's failure to read the signs of the times aright at this point makes his whole plea for a revival of the idea of progress rather vain, as though one could, by an act of will, revive faith in an idea without acknowledging the real causes for the loss of this faith.

REVIEWERS

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In Brief

CHRISTIAN HOPE, *by John Macquarrie, Seabury, $7.95, 131 pp.*

From John Macquarrie one expects and gets incisiveness, breadth of view, control of the sources, and provocation. A central theme in this modest volume on eschatology (found in a different form in Raymond Brown's *The Birth of the Messiah*) is that the first understanding of eschatological promise (Abraham, infancy account, public ministry, resurrection) are only first approximations, unspecified and misty, which are rethought and given precision in the light of later experience. The infancy account and Jesus's public ministry are clearer to us in their meaning than to those who first experienced them because we see them with hindsight, through the lens of the passion and resurrection. Eschatology sees clearest backwards before it sees darkly forward.

Macquarrie understands the resurrection as the central mystery by which Christianity stands or falls, which he conceives mythologically, meaning Jesus fulfilled the essential possibilities of human existence and now lives on a new level of existence. To some extent this is based on the broad and continuous experience of Christians who claim to know in their lives the presence of the living God manifested in the risen Christ.

Disillusioned by the dualism implied in the immortality of the soul, and distressed by the spiritual physics necessary to sustain the final resurrection of our bodies, Macquarrie approaches the problem of individual destiny by borrowing from process theology and Einstein's theory of relativity to elaborate an approach to the future life where our past is gathered up, healed and inserted into the experience of God who is both outside of and dominates our space-time continuum. This realization of total hope is more than the persistence of what God remembers.

Quite rightly Macquarrie says there is no viable eschatology which omits judgment and renewal. To this I would add élan. Without opting for an apocalyptic eschatology, some account should be taken of this impatience which Paul expressed in cosmic terms when he spoke of creation waiting in eager longing, groaning in travail, for the final revelation of the redemption of our bodies, and expressed in personal terms when he spoke of desiring to be dissolved and be with Christ.

Unless this élan is preserved one tends to get an outline without urgency and one ends up with that warm deism which David Tracy mentions. It has been said that process thought can have no eschatology. Not so, as William Beardslee has demonstrated.

KILIAN McDONNELL

A STOPPING PLACE, *by A. G. Mojtabai, Simon & Schuster, $10.95, 345 pp.*

In a "note to the reader' A. G. Mojtabai informs us: "While writing this book, I was haunted by an image—an image of parallel lines unfolding, nowhere converging." Her novel deals with the "parallel lines" of three characters who never really "converge"—they pursue different, crooked paths, hoping to find salvation through art, politics, and self-assertion, but they cannot reach "a stopping place" where they achieve complete peace of mind.

Although Mojtabai writes about three strikingly odd individuals—the American poet, Melus; the Christian-Hindu statesman, Nirmal Roy; the despairing American wife of an Iranian, Kate Nazar—they are presented as part of a larger scheme, an almost fatalistic plan. Their private frustrations and limited joys symbolize social conditions. They are involved in political movements (whether or not they desire such com-

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mitment). Thus the novel moves from self to society (or vice versa).

The focal point of the novel is the clash of cultures, of spiritual visions. When a sacred relic (of hair) is taken, we are made to feel that the relic is the key to the underlying design of the novel. Each of the three is, in individual ways, cheated or assaulted—or better yet, raped—by thefts of ultimate dreams, secret hopes. The novel is, we can say, a pattern of violations of personality, country, and religion; it affirms that war—be it marital, social, or religious—is the governing force on earth. It would be dangerous, therefore, to take Mojtabai's "note" at face value—the novel itself is filled with deceptions, masquerades, lies (official and unofficial)—because the "stopping place" is the subtle crossroads of power in its various forms and guises.

There is an accumulation of "chances and coincidences." Kate is believed by her husband to love Melus (whom she meets at one party!); Nirmal Roy dies when he least expects to. But we see that these "chances and coincidences" are not mere contrivances of plot. They are, indeed, the guiding principles; they suggest that reality (and fiction) is *chained* to mysterious causes. I don't want to suggest that Mojtabai is an orthodox believer, but she is continually aware of an overarching plot, a grand pattern of the world (however chaotic and chance-ridden events appear). By uniting, if only in this tightly-written "panorama," the lives of three characters, she apparently wants us to recognize that "worlds collide" every day. E. M. Forster said: "Only connect." Mojtabai does—for her brilliant, artistic, religious purposes.

IRVING MALIN

Correspondence

(Continued from page 578)

potential of the play.

No one would suggest that the remedy is uncomplicated. Far from it. The complexities are immediately apparent when villagers respond to any suggestion of change — that they are only being true to the Gospel story, something they have been taught since infancy.

The issue in my judgment is not Oberammergau, for the villagers and their Passionspiel are merely symbols. The issue is really one to be faced by the churches. The question to be faced is given the many ecclesiastical pronouncements condemning anti-Semitism, whether hostility to Jews and Judaism continues to be communicated to men, women and children in their churches, religious schools or at Passion Plays where they receive the Gospel message interpreted by woodcarvers, actors, politicians or even some clergy.

THEODORE FREEDMAN
National Program Director,
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

Legislating morality

Arlington Heights, Ill.

To the Editors: Implicit in the U.S. Supreme Court's *Harris v. McRae* ruling upholding the Hyde Amendment is the judgment that society indeed has the right to "legislate morality." Mr. Justice Potter Stewart said as much when he observed during the oral arguments in April that almost all our laws — for example, laws against theft and murder — have a religious origin in the Ten Commandments.

Ironically, one popular argument favoring the Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision is that "We cannot legislate morality." Yet that ruling in effect imposed the moral views of pro-abortionists on those who think abortion is the killing of unborn babies.

It is true that anti-abortion laws legislate morality, but only in the same sense that we legislate morality when we outlaw incest, rape, child prostitution, stealing and murder. When we make these activities illegal, we "impose moral, ethical and religious views" on those who engage in these acts.

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW

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